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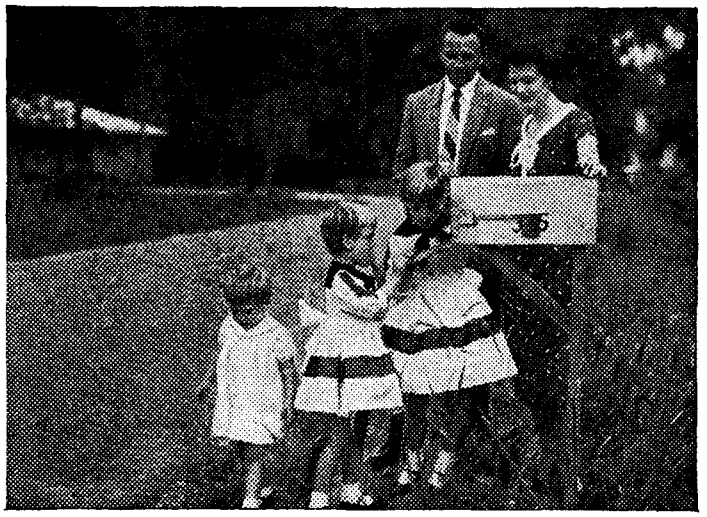

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The American Imperial Disease

J. A. LUKACS

THIS IS AN ARTICLE ABOUT THE FOREIGN POLICIES of my adopted country. It is a critical article; but I do not intend it to be bitter. Thus I ask my readers not to equate it with the frequent carpings about America of European refugees, for I think that I am writing not so much from frustration in remembering some kind of a European past, but rather from concern with the future of the American people. Unlike certain émigré "experts" I shall not, on the other hand, pose as a super-American, for I am still, and will always remain, a European at heart; and I believe that one of the unique features of American citizenship is that this duality of loyalties may be considered a uniting rather than a divisive factor. Note, finally, that I am writing about the foreign policies of American governments, although these policies and the inclinations of the American people toward other nations are not always the same. I may dislike and distrust the Department of State; but ever since I came here twelve years ago my ultimate trust in the decency of the American people has grown.

The year 1958 stands at a curiously proportionate distance from great and important milestones in American history. It was sixty years ago, in 1898, that the march toward an American world empire began with the acquisition of Caribbean and Pacific colonies through the Spanish-American War. It was forty years ago,

J. A. LUKACS is associate professor of history at Chestnut Hill and La Salle Colleges in Philadelphia. He is the author of *The Great Powers and Eastern Europe* and the editor of a new volume of Tocqueville's writings recently published by Doubleday Anchor Books. His articles and essays have appeared in historical journals as well as in *Encounter, Commentary* and *Commonweal.*

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in 1918, that for the first time in history American armies landed in Europe and American brigades camped within Russia: it was the year of the Fourteen Points, and the *George Washington* carried Wilson to an exhausted Europe and to the chairmanship of world peace. And it is a little more than twenty years ago that Franklin Roosevelt's Quarantine Speech indicated the potentiality of American involvement in a coming second world war. In 1938 there were virtually no American possessions or military bases outside the Western Hemisphere; today there is an American world empire involving five continents and an overwhelming network of American military bases abroad.

It is almost always a source of wonder to me that Americans do not recognize the immense character of this American world revolution. It is true that the Russians have a world-revolutionary dogma and that the Americans do not (although certain doctrines and procedures of our diplomatic and propaganda services *are* dogmatic and revolutionary, while the Russians do not always act in accordance with the tenets of Marx or even of Lenin). But the point is that today American troops are stationed in the Mediterranean, in Central Europe, in Arabia and in the Arctic, while the Russian empire does not extend much beyond the frontiers of the czardom of a hundred years ago. Indeed, ever since the end of the last world war, the Russians have retreated from some of their advanced positions in Asia and in Europe, while we have advanced in leaps rather than within bounds. We now have alliances with peoples far beyond our oceanic frontiers, while the Russians have virtually no binding alliances except with their Communist and satellite neighbors.

Personal experiences illuminate for me the extent of this American world revolution. One of my neighbors, here in southeastern Pennsylvania, is an admirable old American family with six children and innumerable grandchildren. Today every one of these children is abroad on some kind of a foreign assignment involved with the management of the American empire; none of them were abroad twenty years ago; only two of them served abroad during the last war. A few months ago I read a newspaper

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article about the operations of a radio center constructed by the United States Air Force in the formerly Italian and now Ethiopian territory of Eritrea. I had not known until I read the article that we have such a base in Eritrea; and then it occurred to me that there may be not more than a handful of Americans—including the majority of our international "experts," the President and perhaps even the Secretary of State—who could sit down with a map and a pencil and list all the countries in which we have military bases today.

The most commendable thing about this world revolution is, of course, the fact that Americans did not really want a world empire. No matter what happens in the future, there remains enough historical evidence that these international responsibilities were accepted for at least five decades by an often reluctant people without much of an imperialist spirit. From the critics of the Spanish-American War sixty years ago, through the partisans of our evacuation of Cuba and Nicaragua twenty-five years ago, to such people as George Kennan today, there has accumulated a spiritual capital of evidence for American decency that compares well with the record of any Great Power. As late as ten years ago the reaction of the American people to the economic distress of Europe was spontaneous, generous and more than considerably Christian in spirit. And within the first Berlin airlift, as well as within President Truman's decision to resist the Communist attack in Korea, there gleamed something infinitely more precious than a mere strategic calculation of national interests: there gleamed therein a spark of generous anger and a sense of Western Christian honor.

It is true that the American people did not want an empire; and it is true that not even their government consciously knew what it was doing as it spun out a network of bases and alliances all around the Soviet Union. But I invite my readers to consider the revolution in the American national attitude during these last ten or fifteen years. I believe that the evidence is striking.

It was fifteen years ago, about 1943, that the primacy of American power became evident. Yet for the next five years the United

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States refused to consider the stationing of American forces in Western Europe with any degree of permanence. It almost refused to accept occupation zones in southern Germany and in Austria. It refused even to listen to various Churchillian plans aimed at forestalling Russia in Southern or Central Europe. Even after Yalta, it refused to take positive action against the developing Sovietization of Eastern European states. It refused, beyond mediation, to intervene in the civil war in China. It agreed to set up the supranational United Nations on American soil and to give the Soviet Union three votes to one American vote. It offered to set up a central German government based on national elections. It proposed to give up its monopoly of the atomic bomb in exchange for fair international inspection.

It is true that some of these policies were narrow and some of them foolish; yet there remained within them a residue of American benevolent idealism. Consequently, between 1948 and 1952, the American government took energetic action against the potential overflow of Communist tyranny to the unaffected areas of the world. It underwrote the defense of Western Europe. It supported the cause of a united Europe without second thoughts or qualifications. It chose to defend Greece, Berlin and Korea at the cost of American blood. It established what, in practice, amounted to a generous peace settlement with West Germany and Japan. Most of these policies were neither narrow nor foolish; they were but the hardly avoidable consequences of the earlier mistakes. And throughout the ten years between the North African landing and the death of Stalin, the specter that chilled broadminded Americans as well as the peoples of the free world was that of a resurgent isolationism, a repetition of the post-Wilsonian American disillusionment, the fear that the American people would have had enough and would leave the rest of the free world to its fate.

But now comes the contrast. During the five years between 1953 and 1958, the government of this country has made it clear on a number of important occasions that it would not contemplate the eventual withdrawal of American forces from the middle of Europe even if the Russians, in turn, would remove their troops from some

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of their East European satellites.[1] More important, during the NATO Conference in December of 1957, the American government indicated that we would not consider such a withdrawal even if some of our own allies desired it.[2] We had agreed to the mutual evacuation of Austria, on our original terms, only after some reluctance. Appearances notwithstanding, we have refused to discuss German unification on the basis of our original proposals that called for a free and neutral Germany. In Europe at least we are among the revisionists and the Russians are among the *status quo* powers, not only ideologically (for in that respect it is natural that we should not acquiesce in the permanent enslavement of Eastern European nations) but also territorially, for we alone among the Great Powers have given tacit support to German ambitions di-

[1] Among these occasions the following stand out: (1953) Churchill's "Eastern Locarno" plan, dismissed by Republican military men and *Time* and *Life* as the speculations of a man grown senile—the same men and the same organs that ten years before had berated him for being a "Victorian imperialist" when he sent British troops into Greece to put down a Communist insurrection; (1954) Malenkov's diplomatic soundings; (1956) Russian suggestions during and even after the Hungarian Revolution; (1957) the Rapacki propositions. Apart from the moral responsibility incurred by the present Administration before history for dismissing every one of these opportunities without any sort of consideration, just think how this sham sort of "principled behavior" (covering up really a lot of mush) strengthened the hand of Mao and the radical wing in Moscow, and helped to freeze up again whatever "thaw" in Russian policies may have existed, at least in Europe.

[2] This was written well before the Lebanese and Berlin crises. Their development not only does not modify, but it confirms the thesis of this article. Right now (November, 1958) none of our commentators, including liberals and erstwhile Russophiles, see the forest for the trees. But how different is the present Berlin issue from the 1948 blockade! We are now protesting against—and this is the irony of it—a Russian threat to withdraw! I am not naïve; I know that the East German "government" consists of the most despicable of Soviet stooges. Yet I also know that what the Russians are aiming for now is a neutral Germany and not a Sovietized Germany—something that we would have been glad to settle for ten years ago, while today we have committed ourselves to establish atomic missile bases within Germany, which is of course what the Russians want to obstruct and avoid. And here the hypocrisy of the now stock official argument enters. "If there is a mutual withdrawal," Washington keeps saying, "the Russians move back a few hundred miles at the most; they'll be still at the doorstep of Europe, while we must pull back thousands of miles across the Atlantic." Leaving aside the fact that this is by no means the only alternative, let me ask: when have the Russians not been at the doorstep of Europe? But of course. The very argument suggests that it little matters what the Russians might do: we are settled down in Europe for good. Ten years ago it was Europe that needed America more than America needed Europe; today the reverse is true. America needs the European launching-site for her own strategic interests. The concept of the NATO "trip wire" has become Europe's own trap. Wait until the majority of Europeans realize this: then there will be a crack in the much touted unity of Western Christendom, a crack such as not even Stalin dreamed of.

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rected against the present western frontiers of Poland (which is, by the way, about the only outstanding territorial issue in Europe). Appearances and alliance texts notwithstanding, for the first time in history our government has chosen Germany and not Britain to be our main European ally. Despite appearances and propaganda, we are now supporting the movement for a united Europe only insofar as such a European union does not attempt to pursue a truly independent role. I am not even speaking of our tergiversations on the atomic armament issues. We have involved ourselves in the corrupting and treacherous maze and mire of Arab politics. We are transforming the United Nations into an instrument which, by reason of numbers, tends more than often to act against the interests of Britain and of Europe. It is now an accepted axiom of our government that everything we do must be related to our imperial position vis-à-vis Russia: that we must outproduce, outshout, outeducate, outpropagandize, outbomb, outspy, outfinance and outdance the Russians whenever and wherever possible. The State Department, openly or surreptitiously, has found it proper to use the money of American taxpayers to erect clandestine radio stations, to finance the tours of American "amateur" athletes, to send bop "musicians" and hep "architects" all around the world, while it bribes thousands of American "experts," writers, artists and scholars to work on dubious "projects" subordinated to the cold war. My quotation marks are not accidental.

And now, when we are literally shooting for the moon, it has been recognized by only a handful of Americans that the Russians have already felt compelled to retreat from those advanced positions that they held at the end of the last war. In Europe, they have withdrawn from the Finnish naval base, from the Danish island of Bornholm, from their strategically invaluable portion of eastern Austria; they have grumbled but felt they had to acquiesce in the independence of Yugoslavia and, to some extent, of Poland; and they have at least suggested that, under certain conditions, they might withdraw from parts of Eastern Europe. In Asia they have given up Sinkiang, their naval bases in Dairen, their domain over the Manchurian railroads; they ceded their pre-eminence in North Korea to the Chinese, while even in Outer Mongolia their hold may

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be weakening.[3] It is a curious and regrettable paradox that although many of these concessions would have been inconceivable under Stalin, it has been since his death that a new American Administration has refused to discuss or even to acknowledge most of them.

Of course, the Russians have not acted in accord with some profound change of heart. They withdrew when they felt that it would be to their advantage in the long run. But what else, I ask, could we expect of them? Here we meet with another State Department shibboleth: the "tactical retreats" of the Soviets, the "zigzag course" advocated by Lenin. But isn't any and every retreat a tactical one? At any rate, in some parts of Europe the Russians now are learning the lesson Talleyrand was supposed to have enunciated—that one can do many things with bayonets (but not sit on them). One can also do many things with party platforms (but not stand on them) —and yet I am still amazed that a plank in Section Nine of the Republican Party Platform of 1956 has never attracted any attention. For this plank called for no less than "the establishment of American bases strategically dispersed all around the world."

Nothing better illustrates the extent of the revolution in American political attitudes, and the absolute anachronism of our accepted political categories, than the thoughtless endorsement of this plank by what is still called by commentators the "conservative" and "traditionally isolation-minded" Republican party of the United States.

Perhaps this is not a revolution in our political attitudes. It is something else. For "politics," in the original, Aristotelian sense of the word, means a concern with one's own community, with a reasonable approach to its affairs. But as I read Gaither Reports, Rockefeller Reports, space-age reports or what not, it occurs to me that we are no longer talking politics. Our "experts" are talking something else. They are talking Globics (*pron.* Globix).

[3] I think that the policy of this government not to recognize Communist China and not to abandon Chiang is generally correct. But how incorrect and false it is when our government accuses the "international conspirators" of Moscow of having "plotted" the Quemoy crisis, when the growth of Chinese power menaces Russia and America, both of which are marginal powers in the Far East. This is, of course, why Mao would like to embroil Russia with America over Europe, for he knows that in the Far East, Russian and American interests hardly conflict at all.

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Globics or politics, I am concerned with the revolutionary transformation of the postulates of our official position. And I am concerned with the effects of all of this on the American people. When I see young Americans, and especially their wives, now so eager to be employed abroad because of the luxurious benefits of this new sort of proconsulship; when I see the glutted American industry growing permanently dependent on military orders in peacetime; when I see our commerce growing dependent on exports for the first time; when I see the increasing inclination of our professional intellectuals to angle for governmental contracts and foreign propaganda assignments; when I see many more evidences of our gradual transformation into an imperial garrison state; when I see that we now have a student generation born twenty years ago which is accustomed to regard these extraordinary world-wide involvements as normal and to be taken for granted—I am, of course, reminded of the Roman Empire. Although I know that history does not necessarily repeat itself, I see the similarities perhaps less with the rising Imperium of Octavian than with the declining Empire of Constantine. In my lifetime I have seen what has happened to great European nations when they had been bitten by the imperial bug and soaked with the arguments of a Chosen People. I am now seeing what this is doing to Russia. I do not like to speculate what the further propagation of the imperialist virus might do to the qualities of the American people.

As I am writing for an American audience, at this point the inevitable American question arises: "What does he want us to do about all this?" My answer is that once Americans begin to think about this disease, they will do something about it. For the correction of the disease depends wholly on the proper recognition of its existence, of its extent and of its sources. And the source of this disease lies in the peculiar sickness of the modern intellect whose analytical capacities are impaired in the twentieth century. I am struck by the cultivated blindness of our "experts" and, indeed, of many more benevolent and decent Americans who are unable even to recognize the existence of the events that I have attempted to outline. Are Americans no longer able or willing to see the dangers in trying to become the Scoutmasters of the World? What will this do to the soul and body of this great nation?

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Here I think that the American reaction to the Kennan proposals is an outstanding illustration. There was nothing radical or shocking in these essentially conservative, thoughtful proposals, so full of the consciousness of history. Yet almost all American commentators, "liberals" as well as "conservatives" (again the quotation marks are not accidental), were either baffled or shocked by them. And here I wish to disagree even with those who are otherwise sympathetically inclined toward Kennan and who said, as did Kenneth W. Thompson in *Commonweal* (April 4, 1958), that "we have witnessed the beginning of a great debate in American foreign policy." We have witnessed nothing of the sort. While a sample poll in England showed that 75 per cent of those questioned knew about Kennan, I do not believe that more than one per cent of our population knows his name. There has not yet appeared a single article by an American writer urging full support to Kennan's theses. Nor did Kennan's very readable book appear among the fifteen best-selling "works" of nonfiction. In the April, 1958, *Atlantic,* Walter Lippmann quoted Kennan: "What I have tried to suggest here is not what governments should do, but what they should think about." "This," Lippmann added, "I believe, he has accomplished." This I know he has not; but the fault is not with Kennan.

The fault lies with those responsible opinion-making elements in American society—and this includes a thin but broad stratum of people extending from the State Department to college professors of international relations—people who have allowed themselves to rest satisfied with intellectual slogans; who are now profiting from the lucrative opportunities provided by our imperial revolution; who feel comfortable in being listened to and in being on the side of the respectable Christian legions; who, led by certain refugee "experts" of European origin, have attempted during the past ten years to promote a new sort of American *Realpolitik*, an atomic Machiavellianism custom-tailored to American needs; who are talking about the wrong kind of danger abroad as well as at home, against the dying ideology of communism instead of warning us against Russian national ambitions, and against the now dead tendency of American isolationism instead of warning us against radical global "crusades." Hence, there is all this cheap nonsense about "clean bombs" and our "posture of strength," as well as the fright-

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ening implications of the change that I claim to detect in American public and private life in the twelve years during which I have lived among the American people and taught their children: the shift, at the bottom, from the previously often insubstantial and individualistic American overoptimism about human nature, to the present suspicious and fatalistic overpessimism—a shift evident in many fields of American life right now. Because of the strange alchemy of human souls and minds it is very easy to slide from undue illusions to undue cynicism. But it is not only that I do not want to witness and that I do not want to live in a cynical America. It is that I believe, and not only for spiritual reasons, that a cynical America will be courting surprising and shattering defeat.

Strategically, politically and culturally, the best hope for these United States is the emergence of a truly independent Europe, and not a "united" Europe tied to American atomic power lines and purse strings. There is evidence to believe that this is exactly what our government and "experts" do not want; it may deprive them of a big share of their self-proposed jobs. Meanwhile, new sets of jobs are being created under such names as "challenge in Africa," "challenge in Asia," et cetera. But we are forgetting two things about Europe: first, that decline and fall are not the same; and, second, that although the nations of Europe may no longer be the main actors, Europe is still the main theater of history.

Yet the movements of the spirit are still at the bottom of politics. On the one hand, I not only trust but know and feel that surprising reservoirs of chastened American idealism do exist. On the other hand, I see that strange American mixture of narrow fideism and broad fatalism, of outward confidence and inward fear, expressed nowadays in these falsely "realistic" words: An Atomic War With Russia Is Inevitable. But, like "irresistible," the "inevitable" is so often only what people do not wish, or dare, to resist. I do not say that the Russians are already the Publicans—far from that, alas—and not even that we are already the Pharisees. All I say is that if we choose the road of the Pharisee, this Republic, my adopted country, the erstwhile hope of the free world, is doomed.

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The Human Privilege

HOWARD LOWRY

ONE OF AMERICA'S CHOICE PHENOMENA is the veteran baseball player Satchel Paige. Asked once how he managed to stay so young, he gave his rules, and one of them was this: "Never look back. Something might be gaining on you." I have no wish to try, even at an anniversary, to chart the rise and fall of life in the American culture of the last seventy-five or one hundred years. Men who spend their days as recklessly as college presidents spend theirs should tread lightly on ground where an Adams, an Allen, a Beard, a Curti and a Commager, and all the others straight down a brilliant alphabet, have been before them. They should, before pontificating on the subtle pattern of what was then and what is now, recall what Herbert Spencer's friends used to say of him—that his idea of a tragedy was a deduction killed by a fact.

I would, however, like to honor the invitation to consider here, in perspective, what we have come to call the "organization man" of the twentieth century, in his variety of forms, and what he has come to represent mentally and spiritually in our time. His existence gives a challenge to learning and scholarship. It takes us close to the heart of things. In this new person, whose life we all share in some way, we see many of our present dangers, our hopes and our practical opportunities.

Eight years ago, straightway in the middle of our century, David Riesman and his colleagues published *The Lonely Crowd.* The book, as I have said elsewhere, rang like a warning bell in

✪ HOWARD LOWRY, president of the College of Wooster, formerly was a professor of English literature at Wooster and at Princeton University. From 1935 to 1941 he was general editor and educational manager of the Oxford University Press, New York.

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the minds of thoughtful readers, for here was word of a new form of the spiritual loneliness of man. It was not the loneliness he had already known in a hundred ways—on the desert, on the sea, in mountain solitude or in the face of the silent stars. Man had long been familiar with death, with unrequited love, with the benumbing failure of all human communication. He had wandered as a solitary between worlds of doubt and faith. He had had in his time the shock of Copernicus and Darwin, and the news of the dark caverns in his own subconsciousness. On the plains of the West he had heard not just the coyote's cry in the night and the other classic sounds of desolation, but a violent noise of nature split in two, of matter undergoing the miracle of becoming nothing with the threat of becoming everything. He had seen the strange clouds in the sky full of their frightening, ambiguous rain. Man had known the loneliness even of abject and slavish fear. In many places of the earth he had enacted that metaphor of Mr. Lippmann's which has been called one of the tremendous metaphors of our era—when a whole society or nation will "welcome manacles to prevent its hands shaking." So man has many times felt bereft of home, and this bereavement is quite ancient in the world.

But the "lonely crowd," as Mr. Riesman sees it, is another matter. This belongs especially to our time. It is made up of men and women who take their direction not from high tradition or from goals and standards inwardly held, but from "the others," the contemporaries they actually know or have heard about through friends and the mass media. They come largely from the upper middle classes of our large cities. But they are spreading, and much of our education fosters their development. Their "other-directedness" is not that of the healthy extrovert who is just naturally a fine, outgoing fellow. Neither does it represent any solid love or concern for a neighbor or a community. It reflects rather a very anxious desire for immediate approval, for giving the calculated glad-hand in conformity to the right group—a desire to be "well-adjusted" and to "get along." There are no dearly bought, long-range aims, no great men summoned from the past as models. The password of the lonely crowd is "now," and its very heaven is to be "accepted." This is its god, its goal, its benzedrine.

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Mr. Riesman is very sensible and dispassionate about all this. He has too much knowledge and too much humor to be a label-paster. He sees all of us, at various moments of our lives, moving freely among all the categories. He never, for example, equates "inner-direction" with conscience, and he reminds us that "a scoundrel who knows what he aims for can be as unequivocally inner-directed as a God-fearing Puritan." He thinks that it is no crime for men to want to be liked. He is not angry at the big advertisers, the men in the gray flannel suits, the public relations experts, junior executives or big business.

What he cannot conceal, however, is his concern about this growing lonely crowd in our American culture. These people are lonely because the return, the spiritual enjoyment, of their lives is so thin. They lack values and inner resources and have no authentic life of their own. They "use the noise of the others to drown the noise of the self." They have no chart, no compass and no anchor. They feel no guilt, only "a series of small anxieties." Even their "sphere of pleasures has become a sphere of cares." Having no grand and noble aspirations by which to weigh or measure, they waste their days adjusting themselves to things that are not worth being adjusted to. All this breeds sleekness without fiber, ennui and, at last, a solitary chill about the heart. Such is the new loneliness on a growing mass scale. It is the assembly of the inwardly bereft. And the worst of it is that it is a fashionable kind of loneliness—a loneliness to which men are not just resigning; they are making up to it, asking for it, as they join the lonely crowd.

Six years after Mr. Riesman, William H. Whyte, Jr., published his richly documented account of the "organization man," who has his chief home in the corporations, and his blood brother in clinics, churches, team-research laboratories, drafting rooms and big law offices—at whatever point an individual human life has been unworthily surrendered to the pressures of the group. Mr. Whyte makes no plea for loud and obstinate nonconformity. Nor does he fret himself about the surface standardizations of American life. What does disturb him is our new worship of the organization itself, the exalted jargon about "group dynamics," "communication response," overweighted personality tests, and the whole

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miserable business about "human engineering," the first practitioner of which, as a friend reminds me, must have been Procrustes.

Years ago De Tocqueville, as Mr. Whyte notes, praised the two strains of the American character—an intense individualism coupled with a positive genius for co-operation. Together these found and fixed our frontier and any frontier since that we have really won. But De Tocqueville feared that if America ever destroyed its genius it would be by intensifying the social virtues at the expense of others, by making the individual regard himself as the hostage to prevailing opinion. To prevent this turn of things our education does very little. It is preparing men badly, Mr. Whyte feels, for the new organization society "because it is trying so very hard to do" just that. Instead of providing the "intellectual armor of the fundamental disciplines," instead of giving a man "some sense of where we came from, so that he can judge where he is, and where he is going and why," it invites him to a range of courses "geared for modern man." Only three out of every ten college graduates now major in "anything that could be called a fundamental discipline—in the liberal arts *or* in the sciences."

Looking back a hundred years, through such eyes as Mr. Riesman's or Mr. Whyte's, it would indeed appear that Mr. Darwin's ape has taken a curious turn. He has not been the wild, obstreperous element in us he was feared to be, but rather one whose descendants have shown an alarming capacity to be tamed and engineered into that most dubious of creatures, a thoroughly "adjusted" human being who has made up to the world, gained the whole of it, caught the five-ten train and lost his soul.

Whatever allowance we make for the exaggeration of any thesis, however wonderfully themselves may seem to be the men and women we happen to know, we are and must be aware of one of the great tasks of our time. This task is the bold reaffirmation of the "human privilege." And one draws deeply here on the word "privilege" itself. It has jumped about in history, but its root meaning is "what concerns the individual"—in short, the privilege of a private person. Strictly speaking, one cannot give a privilege to more than one man or woman at a time. And by the human privilege I mean the opportunity offered to a person to seek and to ob-

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tain the fullest meaning he can for his own life—to know the best he can know, and to live by that best against all comers. It is the privilege to learn to use his own mind rather than just somebody else's mind; to judge and choose and renounce and, if possible, create; to examine and make reflective commitments to principles that will exist for him beyond all convenience and group pressures, beyond all the strategy and passing fashions of the world; to hear, beyond the common noises of his time, the old Concord music of "another drummer." It is the privilege to live not just off the questionnaires and burgeoning statistics of his own age, but out of history and the significant hours of the human imagination. It is the privilege to know both the fine lines of law and the infinite reach of freedom and human sympathy; to sense something of his own worth and, hence, the worth and dignity of other men; to acquire, out of some faith he freely chooses, knowing what the possible choices are, the center and direction that will be his life. It is the privilege to say again, however small his voice, in his own time and way: "Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy."

The human privilege is to enjoy, moreover, to the extent a man can qualify for it (for note that a privilege is always more than a right) the human liberal education that has conferred and still can confer these things on people. This is the armor that gives protection "to souls of more than mortal privilege" against settling for some view of themselves as fractional men—as "biological" man, "political" man, "economic" man, "power" man, "corporation" man, or as a member of the lonely crowd. This defends us against what Mr. Tillich has called the new form of reason in the twentieth century, the "planning reason"; against the new conformity that is the absence of the individual life and that could thus so easily become the new un-American activity, the new barbarism of our highly civilized time. The word "underprivileged" may come to have a new meaning, for the underprivileged may be the fed, the sheltered, the secure, those who have all the rights and gifts save one—their own lives.

If modern man has his real humanity so threatened by the

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forms and pressures of 1958, he can look back, at least, across a lively century. A century of gains and losses, of mixed results, and some very special difficulties that have brought him where he is. Behind all he now thinks and feels is the clanking weight of his overwhelming practical question: the problem of war and peace. Exactly one hundred years ago, while John Stuart Mill reminded him of his vital and animating liberty, while Omar Khayyám, in a bright new translation that hardly sold at all, whispered that the stars were setting and the Caravan was starting for the Dawn of Nothing, another voice told him that even a life of low origin had moved upward. Now, a century later, we worry not about the survival of the fittest, but about the survival of anybody. This trims any exuberance we feel over the achievements of the past.

But the gains are there. Surely the end of human slavery is one of them. Others are the widespread care for human welfare, advanced by public and private means, the narrowing of the gap between poverty and riches, a solid rise in the standard of living for the bulk of our people, our reduction of illiteracy and our extension of educational opportunity, our notable achievements in medicine and health. A man whose life expectancy has been advanced by fifty per cent in fifty years has at least a longer chance at the human privilege. Mr. Toynbee, it will be remembered, feels that our century may be known in history less for two world wars than for its distinction as the time when man first became aware that his long dream of freedom from destitution and disease might be realized.

Even the foreign critics who thought our culture thin—and it was just seventy-five years ago that Matthew Arnold first looked upon our "lack of beauty and distinction"—even these critics admired the genius and flexibility of our political institutions. The foreign observers praised also the quality of American women. And if these very ladies had been reminded, as the late Dixon Ryan Fox recalled, by the popular libraries at the end of the eighteenth century that wit was "the most dangerous talent" they could possess and that "with the character of a Christian woman, nothing, methinks, can better correspond, than a propensity to melt into

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affectionate sorrow," they have since been freed in all directions.

Surely we are less provincial. We may not yet know mankind in the wisest way, but we at least know the world, as tourist ground or as problem to be solved in the best American fashion. We have taken over Europe in the summer, and the Californians, who never used to go at all when

> East were the
> Dead kings and the remembered sepulchres:
> West was the grass

now hop up over the Pole and get there ahead of the rest of us. Denis Brogan, admirer of the lines of Archibald MacLeish just quoted, is one of the most generous of the foreign observers of our country, although Mr. Maritain may rival him. In *The American Character,* Mr. Brogan goes on record: "There is no country in the world where discussion of the world's affairs is carried on at such a high level as in the United States." ("There are also," he adds, "few countries where it is carried on at such a low level, but that is another story.")

It is this other story, however, that worries the thoughtful American of today who reckons his gains and losses and wonders how worthy he may be of any vast extension of the human privilege. He knows he has cause for pride. But he is troubled about his taste, just as Walt Whitman, who had taste for just about everything, was troubled eighty-seven years ago. Our crowded and well-run art galleries, our outstanding development in musical appreciation—David Manning White has reminded us of our thirty-two major orchestras as against six in 1900, of country-wide symphonic groups, of the fifteen million people who hear opera on Saturday afternoon, of the twenty million recordings of Toscanini alone purchased since 1920—and even those who paint and play and do ceramics over the broad land do not wholly reassure him. When Mr. Barzun compares the new recording of our vast rediscovered musical literature to something "like the Renaissance rediscovering the ancient classics and holding them fast by means of the printing press," he does not drown the sound of rock-and-roll or even the occasional critic who cynically regards our musical and artistic preoccupation as simply a flight from the harder discipline of reading.

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Our theater has its fresh moments of creation, perhaps more off Broadway than on, and our literature—not just our poems and novels, but our history, biography, criticism, our best scholarship and our best journalism—has its own terrain and its "original relation to the universe," as Emerson hoped it would. The question "Who reads an American book?" is now clearly out of order. But the question of our total culture still haunts an orderly mind.

What we are suspicious of, ironically, are those very media which, if rightly used, could extend our cultural privilege beyond anything yet dreamed. And many are still determined they shall be used that way. The new turn in paperback books rightly gives them courage. But art, music and literature are, even so, a valuable commodity to be exploited at will, and a vast market awaits anybody who wants money and is, for the sake of it, quite willing to be a "consecrated obstruction," as Walter Bagehot termed George III, to goodness, beauty and truth. Moreover, we are easily enchanted by going concerns. Professor Ralph Barton Perry once put his finger on the everlasting problem: "When men are encouraged to believe that the great and good things of life are within the reach of all, they are inclined to invert the principle, and to believe that what lies within the reach of all is great and good."

Down in his heart, today's thoughtful American still worries about his gadgets and his materialism. He likes his gadgets very much. And he remembers Mr. Dooley's wry remark that what most unites America is a common impulse for the same money. He suspects, nevertheless, with Oliver Allston that "we love this material grandeur because human grandeur is lacking in our minds." Often he merely gets fed up, with the weary sense that he has now seen everything in his chromium-plated world. I well recall the night I accompanied the late Desmond MacCarthy out of the theater on his first sight of Broadway by night. "Tell me," he said, "how do you Americans ever manage to celebrate anything?" There is also the heavy burden of the growing power of our wants stimulated at every turn. And finally we see that our gadgets include more than our machines. They are every mechanization of our lives—all our sterile reports and lists and unneeded mimeographed sheets, rightly called by Mr. Barzun "the modern counterpart of Paul Revere's

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ride"; our love of information for information's sake; our meaningless speed and vast means of communication that, for all their great advantage, do often press us far too quickly into the full utterance of thoughts we have never had.

And all we can still do about this trite problem is to remember that the gadgets reflect ourselves, and not to be like the old Scotsman who damned his dictaphone because it had the worst Aberdeen accent he'd ever heard. Against those who would exploit us we can keep our vigilance—against what vulgarizes and benumbs us. The fight against all narcotics is wider than we think. But what we have to trust in the long run is whatever character is in us, and the chance we have of educating that. Is it too much to hope that, in our mechanical paradise, where doors swing open at the touch of light, minds may be opened in the same way? At least a teacher must go on thinking so, or his trade is not in him.

Over the hundred years, beyond all measure of his own attainment, his gains and losses, and the culture of his world, man has asked and still asks the chief human question, "Who am I?" Many voices have answered his inquiry. They have said he was one of the sons of God, a man redeemed, a man with a presiding "daemon" in his otherwise unaided breast, an evolving phase of nature, or nothing at all—and, more recently, the member of a group to which he can become adjusted. Long before he was an organization man in good standing, he had trouble keeping the idea of the individual self alive. The size of everything around him, the uprootedness of his rapidly growing urban life, the confusion over his brand-new subconscious mind, and science, even when the old nineteenth-century determinism was broken and there seemed a new freedom in the natural order—all these were for him

> Both frost and flower, the bright ambiguous symbol
> Of which the meaning is both *yes* and *no*.

And when two world wars, a depression, and a new kind of terror challenged all secular optimism and the whole idea of progress, he asked with new concern about a possible world of values and repeated more fervently the old question, "Who am I?" The responses he has received in the last thirteen years are a familiar story.

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I shall not catalogue them now. Doubtless every one of them is represented among the readers of this article, save possibly the plaintive hope sometimes expressed for "religious values" without religion—a neat trick if one can work it. Somehow the very thought of it reminds me of the freshman girl who at a college registration was asked her church preference and allegedly answered, "Gothic."

Out of the responses, however, did emerge one very significant thing—the willing admission of some of our best scientists that the full world of human values could not be supplied by science alone. Mr. Einstein made it in 1941; and Mr. Conant, in a series of remarkably precise and conscientious addresses, gave it at Columbia ten years later in his *Modern Science and Modern Man.* Joseph Wood Krutch is right in sensing that Mr. Conant's thesis—and I commend your review of it—is a kind of basic and antiseptic charter of our human right to draw, without accounting to anything but experience in the human area of our life, upon that "Moral Discourse which has gone on in Western civilization uninterruptedly for at least three thousand years." All the arts and literature, not just our formal studies, are part of that heritage, "for," as Mr. Krutch writes, "what a Shakespeare has to say about human nature and human conduct is likely to be as true as, and rather more important than, what the summarizer of ten thousand questionnaires can tell us."

Thus the human privilege becomes for modern man, as he looks forward from his own history, the chance to make deliberate choice of the values he will honor and serve. The choice is made not out of the restricted jargon of some partial conditioning process or some human engineer's plot against him, but out of the richest and fullest account he can receive of human life. To give this account now—in the face of every short-range invitation, every crash program, every danger and demand upon us—is still the high task of learning and education. And this conception of a liberal education still comes as news to far too many people.

At the moment, however, all education is trying hard and is full of problems. In the fervor after sputnik, one head of a university known not to be niggardly with its athletes, is reported to have cried out in the excitement of a meeting: "I am determined we

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shall have a university our football team can be proud of." The getting of money and the getting of teachers are always with us. And those of us in the little places have a very special enigma. We are told, as someone said, that all the small colleges must get bigger so that more people may have the advantage of going to small colleges. We must solve another practical problem, and do it soon. We must start talking to twelve-year-olds, or their parents, and say something like this: "If five or six years from now you wish to go to college, we shall help you do that. We shall even help you lift your financial load. You do not have to be a genius, but by that time you must have done three or four unmistakable things." We shall have our own hard time, of course, deciding finally what these things exactly are. But being able to read and write is surely one of them. Higher education cannot go on carrying the burden of illiteracy it now carries. To do so is a fraud and a waste of everybody's time. The way I suggest, with its early warning, would at least be fair. In this whole area higher education has, in general, set no standards. It should do so soon, with a united front, operating on a national or regional scale—and really mean it.

Just take a look, if you will, at a principle or two, for these tower even beyond the problems. We come at them through a question. What would you say, if put to it, were the most distinctive gifts America has made the world? Professor Brand Blanshard once named two of them: mass production and the realized idea of a federal union of states. May I venture a third that we yet may make: the demonstration that widespread education and standards of excellence are not impossible.

Something like this seems to animate the very fine report that John Gardner and his committee have made in the Rockefeller document, *The Pursuit of Excellence.* It should be required reading for the nation. It holds that commitment to quality and commitment to the principle of educating everyone up to the level of his ability are not incompatible. And outstanding in the report is one thesis of very great importance: "We must recognize that judgments of differences in talent are not judgments of differences in human worth. . . . *Our conception of excellence must embrace many kinds of achievement at many levels.*" So much of our confusion,

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so much of the gulf between the intellectual and society, has come from our failure to recognize and really to feel that this is so.

Such recognition, however, does not relieve us now of still inviting as many as can qualify to avail themselves of nothing less than a liberal education. The human privilege demands such education. For a truly liberal education can no longer be regarded as merely the door to the learned professions, as the refinement of a gentleman, or as something it is nice to have if one can afford the money and the time. It is now a necessity for all men who can think and feel and comprehend—for men and women who need, as they have rarely needed before, disciplined thought, free minds and imagination, some sense of values and direction, depth and breadth of sympathy, a capacity to share in the vast human debate on main matters, reflective commitment to right causes, the holy gift of discrimination. To save their lives they need men's thoughts. Nothing less adequate and fully human will do. And the new leisure they are at least supposed to have—that, too, must not be wholly given over to broad vice, narrow virtue, joyless enjoyments, and vacuity.

And, above all, let us not underestimate, when all is said, the number in our country who have the ability to accept this high invitation. I agree with Lionel Trilling, one of the best of America's possessions and a man not easily fooled, that there is, for all its seeming opposite, an "increased power of mind in the nation" and an "unmistakable improvement in the American cultural situation of today over that of, say, thirty years ago." Many who could learn will never, of course, pay the real price of learning—the price of loneliness, for example. Aristotle knew, even in Athens, that more men love learning than are willing to do the labor of it. Indeed, when I think of what the price actually is, I have a warm sympathy with the uncomplicated girl who told her dean: "Oh, I can concentrate well enough. But my mind wanders."

Yet to give this broader invitation to excellence, and mean it, is, in the long run, to the scholar's own self-interest. It does not pay to think that the human privilege belongs only to you and a little set of worthy friends. Let Mr. Whyte, to whom I gladly return, put it in his own way: "The great bulk of people will face organization pressures as inhibiting for them as for the few, and they need, as

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much if not more, to have the best that is within them demanded early. Is it 'democratic' to hold that the humanities can have no meaning for them? They do not have to be taught to shake hands with other people; society will attend to this lesson. They have to be taught to reach. All of them. Some will be outstanding, some not, but the few will never flourish where the values of the many are against them." They can resist, to be sure, but perhaps not flourish. And so the wheel comes full circle. Excellence, even for the excellent, is still a privilege.

In the autumn of 1956, sitting in a London hotel, I was startled to read in the *Times* words I never expected to read in a British newspaper. It was an article, part of a series, on "Mr. Eisenhower's America." And these were the unbelievable British words about us: "Can a nation whose power and prosperity demand that more and more of its people shall have a scientific, technological, or vocational education at the same time produce the amount of wisdom needed for the successful leadership of the free world? . . . There can be few great adventures more worth watching than the course of American education. On it may well depend the kind of civilization in which our grandchildren survive."

Mr. Emerson would have liked that, I think. He wanted for us "an original relation with the universe." He would not have minimized the task, but he would have told us to go ahead and try.

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The Seventeen-Year Locusts

DUNCAN C. CLARK

They said it was the year of the locusts,
And, sure enough, they came
Out of the earth, earth-colored,
Into the April sun.
Shedding their dirty skins,
Translated, they filled the air
With a shrill, pervasive singing—
So many it seemed for a time
That all of the scheme of Creation
Had been working toward this climax,
And the earth was Locust-Heaven.
And perhaps it was, but briefly,
For soon they were gone. And I,
Watching their coming and going,
Wondered if our translation
Is as brief and incidental
To the scheme of Paradise
As the locusts' to Locust-Heaven.
Yet we, like the crowding locusts,
Are driven by some blind impulse
Out of the earth that bore us
Toward the unguessable sun.

✪ DUNCAN C. CLARK is assistant director for the public information service of the Atomic Energy Commission. Mr. Clark states that this poem was written in the spring of 1953, "when a great brood of the creatures came out of the earth in the Washington area, changed to adult form, and lived aboveground for perhaps a week."

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Eppur Si Muove?

ROBERT HILLYER

Although it may appear archaic,
My cosmic system's Ptolemaic,
The earth for center, round which run
The circumnavigating sun,
The stars, the galaxy, the moon,
The planets, in concentric tune
To music of the spheres, that plucks
Notes in the theme of *Fiat Lux*
From every heavenly body bound
In counterpoint of radiant sound,
To merge in silence at the end,
Just as in white all colors blend.
And since I know I see but darkly,
I quite agree with Bishop Berkeley—
All is illusion—and I'd therefore
Choose the illusion I most care for.
  Nowise, so it seems to me,
Is happiness or dignity
Advanced by thinking earth is spun,
A mote of dust, around the sun
As sly Copernicans attest
From facts illusory as the rest
And in observed results more dreary
Than any other cosmic theory.
  Ah no, we sit, the earth and I,
While day and night go wheeling by,
The focus of attendant spheres
And keystone of the arching years.

✪ ROBERT HILLYER, who teaches at the University of Delaware, won a Pulitzer Prize in 1934. His most recent book, *The Relic and Other Poems,* published in 1957, marked the fortieth anniversary of the publication of his first book, *Sonnets and Other Lyrics.*

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A Lincoln Anthology in Brief

JACQUES BARZUN

THE FACT THAT LINCOLN was born one hundred and fifty years ago will be celebrated this year in many appropriate ways. One of the best, surely, is to read him. For he is one of the great stylists in English and, as I have tried to show elsewhere,[1] he is not simply the author of a few deeply moving utterances, struck off late in life and, as it were, by accident. Lincoln was a writer from the start of his career, and not merely from the start of the Civil War. In this selection from his private and public papers, I have tried to show his art and versatility by means of unfamiliar passages, which I trust the reader will find all too short. Everyone knows where to turn for the Gettysburg Address, the Second Inaugural and the letter to Mrs. Bixby, and last year the public was given an admirable edition of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates.[2] What I hope for is that the peruser of the selections that follow may be prompted by them to find for himself the largely unsuspected source of literary pleasure in Lincoln's complete writings. The references are to the *Collected Works*, edited by Roy P. Basler and others, Rutgers University Press, nine volumes, 1953-1955. That edition piously preserves, as I do also, Lincoln's variable spelling and punctuation.

To THE PEOPLE OF SANGAMO COUNTY

March 9, 1832

Fellow-Citizens:

. . . .

Time and experience have verified to a demonstration, the public utility of internal improvements. That the poorest and most thinly populated countries would be greatly benefitted by the opening of good roads, and in the clearing of navigable streams

[1] "Lincoln the Literary Genius," *The Saturday Evening Post*, February 14, 1959.

[2] *Created Equal? The Complete Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858*, edited by Paul M. Angle, University of Chicago Press, 1958.

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within their limits, is what no person will deny. But yet it is folly to undertake works of this or any other kind, without first knowing that we are able to finish them—as half finished work generally proves to be labor lost. There cannot justly be any objection to having rail roads and canals, any more than to other good things, provided they cost nothing. The only objection is to paying for them; and the objection to paying arises from the want of ability to pay.

. . . No other improvement that reason will justify us in hoping for, can equal in utility the rail road. . . . Yet, however desirable an object the construction of a rail road through our country may be; however high our imaginations may be heated at thoughts of it—there is always a heart appalling shock accompanying anticipations. The probable cost of this contemplated rail road is estimated at $290,000;—the bare statement of which, in my opinion, is sufficient to justify the belief, that the improvement of Sangamo river is an object much better suited to our infant resources.
[I, 5-6]

To MARY S. OWENS

Aug. 16th 1837

Friend Mary.

You will, no doubt, think it rather strange, that I should write you a letter on the same day on which we parted; and I can only account for it by supposing, that seeing you lately makes me think of you more than usual, while at our late meeting we had but few expressions of thoughts. You must know that I can not see you, or think of you, with entire indifference; and yet it may be, that you, are mistaken in regard to what my real feelings towards you are. If I knew you were not, I should not trouble you with this letter. Perhaps any other man would know enough without further information; but I consider it *my* peculiar right to plead ignorance, and your bounden duty to allow the plea. I want in all cases to do

✪ JACQUES BARZUN, Dean of Faculties and Provost of Columbia University, is a member of the Editorial Board of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. His new book, *The House of Intellect,* will be published in April.

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right, and most particularly so, in all cases with women. I want, at this particular time, more than any thing else, to do right with you, and if I *knew* it would be doing right, as I rather suspect it would, to let you alone, I would do it. And for the purpose of making the matter as plain as possible, I now say, that you can now drop the subject, dismiss your thoughts (if you ever had any) from me forever, and leave this letter unanswered, without calling forth one accusing murmer from me. And I will even go further, and say, that if it will add any thing to your comfort, or peace of mind, to do so, it is my sincere wish that you should. Do not understand by this, that I wish to cut your acquaintance. I mean no such thing. What I do wish is, that our further acquaintance shall depend upon yourself. If such further acquaintance would contribute nothing to your happiness, I am sure it would not to mine. If you feel yourself in any degree bound to me, I am now willing to release you, provided you wish it; while, on the other hand, I am willing, and even anxious to bind you faster, if I can be convinced that it will, in any considerable degree, add to your happiness. This, indeed, is the whole question with me. Nothing would make me more miserable than to believe you miserable—nothing more happy, than to know you were so.

In what I have now said, I think I can not be misunderstood; and to make myself understood, is the only object of this letter.

If it suits you best to not answer this—farewell—a long life and a merry one attend you. But if you conclude to write back, speak as plainly as I do. There can be neither harm nor danger, in saying, to me, any thing you think, just in the manner you think it.

My respects to your sister. Your friend LINCOLN.

[I, 94]

To JOSHUA F. SPEED

Feb: 25 — 1842 —

Dear Speed:

. . . .

I tell you, Speed, our *forebodings*, for which you and I are rather peculiar, are all the worst sort of nonsense. I fancied, from

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the time I received your letter of *saturday*, that the one of *wednesday* was never to come; and yet it *did* come, and what is more, it is perfectly clear, both from it's *tone* and *handwriting*, that you were much *happier*, or, if you think the term preferable, *less miserable*, when you wrote *it*, than when you wrote the last one before. You had so obviously improved, at the verry time I so much feared, you would have grown worse. You say that "something indescribably horrible and alarming still haunts you. ["] You will not say *that* three months from now, I will venture. When your nerves once get steady now, the whole trouble will be over forever. Nor should you become impatient at their being even verry slow, in becoming steady. Again; you say you much fear that that Elysium of which you have dreamed so much, is never to be realized. Well, if it shall not, I dare swear, it will not be the fault of her who is now your wife. I now have no doubt that it is the peculiar misfortune of both you and me, to dream dreams of Elysium far exceeding all that any thing earthly can realize. Far short of your dreams as you may be, no woman could do more to realize them, than that same black eyed Fanny. If you could but contemplate her through my imagination, it would appear ridiculous to you, that any one should for a moment think of being unhappy with her. My old Father used to have a saying that "If you make a bad bargain, *hug* it the tighter"; and it occurs to me, that if the bargain you have just closed can possibly be called a bad one, it is certainly the most *pleasant one* for applying that maxim to, which my fancy can, by any effort, picture.
[I-280]

To THE VOTERS OF THE SEVENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

July 31, 1846

Fellow Citizens:

A charge having got into circulation in some of the neighborhoods of this District, in substance that I am an open scoffer at Christianity, I have by the advice of some friends concluded to notice the subject in this form. That I am not a member of any

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Christian Church, is true; but I have never denied the truth of the Scriptures; and I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general, or of any denomination of Christians in particular. It is true that in early life I was inclined to believe in what I understand is called the "Doctrine of Necessity"—that is, that the human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power, over which the mind itself has no control; and I have sometimes (with one, two or three, but never publicly) tried to maintain this opinion in argument. The habit of arguing thus however, I have, entirely left off for more than five years. And I add here, I have always understood this same opinion to be held by several of the Christian denominations. The foregoing, is the whole truth, briefly stated, in relation to myself, upon this subject. . . .

[I, 382] A. LINCOLN

From A SPEECH TO CONGRESS

July 27, 1848

. . . The other day, one of the gentlman from Georgia (Mr. Iverson) an eloquent man, and a man of learning, so far as I could judge, not being learned, myself, came down upon us astonishingly. He spoke in what the Baltimore American calls the "scathing and withering style." At the end of his second severe flash, I was struck blind, and found myself feeling with my fingers for an assurance of my continued physical existence. A little of the bone was left, and I gradually revived. He eulogised Mr. Clay in high and beautiful terms, and then declared that we had deserted all our principles, and had turned Henry Clay out, like an old horse to root. This is terribly severe. It can not be answered by argument; at least, I can not so answer it. I merely wish to ask the gentleman if the whigs are the only party he can think of, who some times turn old horses out to root. Is not a certain Martin Van Buren, an old horse which your own party have turned out to root? and is he not rooting a little to your discomfort about now? But in not nominating Mr. Clay, we deserted our principles, you say. Ah! in what? Tell us, ye men of principles, what principle we violated. We say you did violate principle in discarding Van Buren, and we can tell you how. You vio-

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lated the primary, the cardinal, the one great living principle of all Democratic representative government—the principle, that the representative is bound to carry out the known will [wishes] of his constituents. . . .

[I, 507]

To JOHN D. JOHNSTON

Novr. 25. 1851.

Dear Brother

Your letter of the 22nd. is just received. Your proposal about selling the East forty acres of land is all that I want or could claim for *myself*; but I am not satisfied with it on *Mother's* account. I want her to have her living, and I feel that it is my duty, to some extent, to see that she is not wronged. She had a right of Dower (that is, the use of one third for life) in the other two forties; but, it seems, she has already let you take that, hook and line. She now has the use of the whole of the East forty, as long as she lives; and if it be sold, of course, she is intitled to the interest on *all* the money it brings, as long as she lives; but you propose to sell it for three hundred dollars, take one hundred away with you, and leave her two hundred, at 8 per cent, making her the *enormous* sum of 16 dollars a year. Now, if you are satisfied with treating her in that way, I am not. It is true, that you are to have that forty for two hundred dollars, *at* Mother's death; but you are not to have it *before*. I am confident that land can be made to produce for Mother, at least $30 a year, and I can not, to oblige any living person, consent that she shall be put on an allowance of sixteen dollars a year. Yours &c

A. LINCOLN

[II, 113]

FRAGMENTS ON SLAVERY

[July 1, 1854?]

dent truth. Made so plain by our good Father in Heaven, that all *feel* and *understand* it, even down to brutes and creeping insects. The ant, who has toiled and dragged a crumb to his nest, will furi-

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ously defend the fruit of his labor, against whatever robber assails him. So plain, that the most dumb and stupid slave that ever toiled for a master, does constantly *know* that he is wronged. So plain that no one, high or low, ever does mistake it, except in a plainly *selfish* way; for although volume upon volume is written to prove slavery a very good thing, we never hear of a man who wishes to take the good of it, *by being a slave himself.*

Most governments have been based, practically, on the denial of equal rights of men, as I have, in part, stated them; *ours* began, by *affirming* those rights. *They* said, some men are too *ignorant,* and *vicious,* to share in government. Possibly so, said we; and, by your system, you would always keep them ignorant, and vicious. We proposed to give *all* a chance; and we expected the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant, wiser; and all better, and happier together.

We made the experiment; and the fruit is before us. Look at it —think of it. Look at it, in it's aggregate grandeur, of extent of country, and numbers of population—of ship, and steamboat, and rail—

* * * *

If A. can prove, however conclusively, that he may, of right, enslave B.—why may not B. snatch the same argument, and prove equally, that he may enslave A?—

You say A. is white, and B. is black. It is *color,* then; the lighter, having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with a fairer skin than your own.

You do not mean *color* exactly?—You mean the whites are *intellectually* the superiors of the blacks, and, therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with an intellect superior to your own.

But, say you, it is a question of *interest*; and, if you can make it your *interest,* you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest, he has the right to enslave you. [II, 222-223]

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SPEECH TO THE JURY IN THE ROCK ISLAND BRIDGE CASE

THIRTEENTH DAY, Chicago, Ill., Tuesday, September 22d, 1857.

. . . But there is a travel from East to West, whose demands are not less important than that of the river. It is growing larger and larger, building up new countries with a rapidity never before seen in the history of the world. . . .

This current of travel has its rights, as well as that north and south. If the river had not the advantage in priority and legislation, we could enter into free competition with it and we would surpass it. This particular line has a great importance, and the statement of its business during little less than a year shows this importance. It is in evidence that from September 8, 1856, to August 8, 1857, 12,586 freight cars and 74,179 passengers passed over this bridge. Navigation was closed four days short of four months last year, and during this time, while the river was of no use, this road and bridge were equally valuable. There is, too, a considerable portion of time, when floating or thin ice makes the river useless, while the bridge is as useful as ever. This shows that this bridge must be treated with respect in this court and is not to be kicked about with contempt. [II, 415-416]

LECTURE ON DISCOVERIES AND INVENTIONS

April 6, 1858.

. . . Climbing upon the back of an animal, and making it carry us, might not occur very readily. I think the back of the camel would never have suggested it.
[II, 440]

AUTOBIOGRAPHY WRITTEN FOR JOHN L. SCRIPPS

[c. June, 1860]

. . . He regrets his want of education, and does what he can to supply the want. In his tenth year he was kicked by a horse, and ap-

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parantly killed for a time. When he was nineteen, still residing in Indiana, he made his first trip upon a flat-boat to New-Orleans. He was a hired hand merely; and he and a son of the owner, without other assistance, made the trip. The nature of part of the cargo-load, as it was called—made it necessary for them to linger and trade along the Sugar coast—and one night they were attacked by seven negroes with intent to kill and rob them. They were hurt some in the melee, but succeeded in driving the negroes from the boat, and then "cut cable" "weighed anchor" and left.

March 1st. 1830—A. having just completed his 21st. year, his father and family, with the families of the two daughters and sons-in-law, of his step-mother, left the old homestead in Indiana, and came to Illinois. Their mode of conveyance was waggons drawn by ox-teams, or A. drove one of the teams. They reached the county of Macon, and stopped there some time within the same month of March. His father and family settled a new place on the North side of the Sangamon river, at the junction of the timber-land and prairie, about ten miles Westerly from Decatur. Here they built a log-cabin, into which they removed, and made sufficient of rails to fence ten acres of ground, fenced and broke the ground, and raised a crop of sow[n] corn upon it the same year. These are, or are supposed to be, the rails about which so much is being said just now, though they are far from being the first, or only rails ever made by A.

[IV, 62-63]

SPEECH IN INDEPENDENCE HALL, PHILADELPHIA

February 22, 1861

. . . I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and adopted that Declaration of Independence—I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army, who achieved that Independence. I have often inquired of myself, what great principle or idea

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it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of the separation of the colonies from the mother land; but something in that Declaration giving liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but hope to the world for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that *all* should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in that Declaration of Independence.

Now, my friends, can this country be saved upon that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. If it can't be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But, if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle—I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than to surrender it.

Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there is no need of bloodshed and war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course, and I may say in advance, there will be no blood shed unless it be forced upon the Government. The Government will not use force unless force is used against it.

My friends, this is a wholly unprepared speech. I did not expect to be called upon to say a word when I came here—I supposed I was merely to do something towards raising a flag. I may, therefore, have said something indiscreet, but I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, in the pleasure of Almighty God, die by. [IV, 240-241]

From THE FIRST INAUGURAL

March 4, 1861

Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence, and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face; and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible then to make that intercourse more advantageous, or more satisfactory, *after* separation than *before*?

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Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens, than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions, as to terms of intercourse, are again upon you.

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their *constitutional* right of amending it, or their *revolutionary* right to dismember, or overthrow it. I can not be ignorant of the fact that many worthy, and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the national constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor, rather than oppose, a fair oppertunity being afforded the people to act upon it.

. . . I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen, has passed Congress, to the effect that the federal government, shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconstruction of what I have said, I depart from my purpose not to speak of particular amendments, so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objection to its being made express, and irrevocable.

[IV, 269-270]

To SALMON P. CHASE

May 8, 1861.

My dear Sir: I am told there is an office in your department called "The Superintending Architect of the Treasury Department, connected with the Bureau of Construction," which is now held by a man of the name of Young, and wanted by a gentleman of the name of Christopher Adams.

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Ought Mr. Young to be removed, and if yea, ought Mr. Adams to be appointed? Mr. Adams is magnificently recommended; but the great point in his favor is that Thurlow Weed and Horace Greeley join in recommending him. I suppose the like never happened before, and never will again; so that it is now or never. What say you? Yours truly,

[IV, 361] A. LINCOLN

To THE FATHER AND MOTHER OF COL. ELMER E. ELLSWORTH

May 25. 1861

My dear Sir and Madam, In the untimely loss of your noble son, our affliction here, is scarcely less than your own. So much of promised usefulness to one's country, and of bright hopes for one's self and friends, have rarely been so suddenly dashed, as in his fall. In size, in years, and in youthful appearance, a boy only, his power to command men, was surpassingly great. This power, combined with a fine intellect, an indomitable energy, and a taste altogether military, constituted in him, as seemed to me, the best natural talent, in that department, I ever knew. And yet he was singularly modest and deferential in social intercourse. My acquaintance with him began less than two years ago; yet through the latter half of the intervening period, it was as intimate as the disparity of our ages, and my engrossing engagements, would permit. To me, he appeared to have no indulgences or pastimes; and I never heard him utter a profane, or an intemperate word. What was conclusive of his good heart, he never forgot his parents. The honors he labored for so laudably, and, in the sad end, so gallantly gave his life, he meant for them, no less than for himself.

In the hope that it may be no intrusion upon the sacredness of your sorrow, I have ventured to address you this tribute to the memory of my young friend, and your brave and early fallen child.

May God give you that consolation which is beyond all earthly power. Sincerely your friend in a common affliction—

[IV, 385-386] A. LINCOLN

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To MAJOR GEORGE D. RAMSAY

Oct. 17, 1861

My dear Sir

The lady—bearer of this—says she has two sons who want to work. Set them at it, if possible. Wanting to work is so rare a merit, that it should be encouraged. Yours truly

[IV, 556] A. LINCOLN

REPLY TO A PETITION BY CHICAGO CHRISTIANS

September 13, 1862

. . . I hope it will not be irreverent for me to say that if it is probable that God would reveal his will to others, on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed he would reveal it directly to me. . . .

[V, 420]

To MAJOR GENERAL JOSEPH HOOKER

January 26, 1863.

General.

I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons. And yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which, I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and a skilful soldier, which, of course, I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable, if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm. But I think that during Gen. Burnside's command of the Army, you have taken counsel of your ambition, and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country, and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the Army and the Government needed a Dictator. Of course it was not *for* this,

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but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes, can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of it's ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the Army, of criticising their Commander, and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can, to put it down. Neither you, nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army, while such a spirit prevails in it.

And now, beware of rashness. Beware of rashness, but with energy, and sleepless vigilance, go forward, and give us victories.
Yours very truly
[VI, 78-79] A. LINCOLN

From DRAFT OF LETTER TO
MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE G. MEADE [Never sent]

July 14, 1863

. . . The case, summarily stated, is this. You fought and beat the enemy at Gettysburg; and, of course, to say the least, his loss was as great as yours. He retreated; and you did not, as it seemed to me, pressingly pursue him; but a flood in the river detained him, till, by slow degrees, you were again upon him. You had at least twenty thousand veteran troops directly with you, and as many more raw ones within supporting distance, all in addition to those who fought with you at Gettysburg; while it was not possible that he had received a single recruit; and yet you stood and let the flood run down, bridges be built, and the enemy move away at his leisure without attacking him. And Couch and Smith! The latter left Carlisle in time, upon all ordinary calculation, to have aided you in the last battle at Gettysburg; but he did not arrive. . . .—And Couch's movement was very little different.

Again, my dear general, I do not believe you appreciate the magnitude of the misfortune involved in Lee's escape. He was within your easy grasp, and to have closed upon him would, in connection with our other late successes, have ended the war. As it

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is, the war will be prolonged indefinitely. If you could not safely attack Lee last monday, how can you possibly do so south of the river, when you can take with you very few more than two thirds of the force you then had in hand? It would be unreasonable to expect you can now effect much. Your golden opportunity is gone, and I am distressed immeasurably because of it.

I beg you will not consider this a prossecution, or persecution of yourself. As you had learned that I was dissatisfied, I have thought it best to kindly tell you why.
[VI, 327-328]

To JAMES H. HACKETT

August 17, 1863.

My dear Sir:

Months ago I should have acknowledged the receipt of your book, and accompanying kind note; and I now have to beg your pardon for not having done so.

For one of my age, I have seen very little of the drama. The first presentation of Falstaff I ever saw was yours here, last winter or spring. Perhaps the best compliment I can pay is to say, as I truly can, I am very anxious to see it again. Some of Shakspeare's plays I have never read; while others I have gone over perhaps as frequently as any unprofessional reader. Among the latter are Lear, Richard Third, Henry Eighth, Hamlet, and especially Macbeth. I think nothing equals Macbeth. It is wonderful. Unlike you gentlemen of the profession, I think the soliloquy in Hamlet commencing "O, my offence is rank" surpasses that commencing "To be, or not to be." But pardon this small attempt at criticism. I should like to hear you pronounce the opening speech of Richard the Third. Will you not soon visit Washington again? If you do, please call and let me make your personal acquaintance. Yours truly

A. LINCOLN

* * * *

Nov. 2. 1863.

My dear Sir:

Yours of Oct. 22nd. is received, as also was, in due course, that

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of Oct. 3rd. I look forward with pleasure to the fulfilment of the promise made in the former.

Give yourself no uneasiness on the subject mentioned in that of the 22nd.

My note to you I certainly did not expect to see in print; yet I have not been much shocked by the newspaper comments upon it. Those comments constitute a fair specimen of what has occurred to me through life. I have endured a great deal of ridicule without much malice; and have received a great deal of kindness, not quite free from ridicule. I am used to it. Yours truly

[VI, 392, 558-559] A. LINCOLN

To LIEUTENANT-GENERAL ULYSSES S. GRANT

August 3, 1864.

I have seen your despatch in which you say "I want Sheridan put in command of all the troops in the field, with instructions to put himself South of the enemy, and follow him to the death. Wherever the enemy goes, let our troops go also." This, I think, is exactly right, as to how our forces should move. But please look over the despatches you may have receved from here, even since you made that order, and discover, if you can, that there is any idea in the head of any one here, of "putting our army *South* of the enemy" or of following him to the *death*" in any direction. I repeat to you it will neither be done nor attempted unless you watch it every day, and hour, and force it. A. LINCOLN

[VII, 476]

From LAST PUBLIC ADDRESS

April 11, 1865

We all agree that the seceded States, so called, are out of their proper practical relation with the Union; and that the sole object of the government, civil and military, in regard to those States is to again get them into that proper practical relation. I believe it is not only possible, but in fact, easier, to do this, without deciding, or even considering, whether these states have ever been out of the Union, than with it. Finding themselves safely at home, it would

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be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad. Let us all join in doing the acts necessary to restoring the proper practical relations between these states and the Union; and each forever after, innocently indulge his own opinion whether, in doing the acts, he brought the States from without, into the Union, or only gave them proper assistance, they never having been out of it.

. . . .

Some twelve thousand voters in the heretofore slave-state of Louisiana have sworn allegiance to the Union, assumed to be the rightful political power of the State, held elections, organized a State government, adopted a free-state constitution, giving the benefit of public schools equally to black and white, and empowering the Legislature to confer the elective franchise upon the colored man. Their Legislature has already voted to ratify the constitutional amendment recently passed by Congress, abolishing slavery throughout the nation. These twelve thousand persons are thus fully committed to the Union, and to perpetual freedom in the state—committed to the very things, and nearly all the things the nation wants—and they ask the nations recognition, and it's assistance to make good their committal. Now, if we reject, and spurn them, we do our utmost to disorganize and disperse them. We in effect say to the white men "You are worthless, or worse—we will neither help you, nor be helped by you." To the blacks we say "This cup of liberty which these, your old masters, hold to your lips, we will dash from you, and leave you to the chances of gathering the spilled and scattered contents in some vague and undefined when, where, and how." If this course, discouraging and paralyzing both white and black, has any tendency to bring Louisiana into proper practical relations with the Union, I have, so far, been unable to perceive it. If, on the contrary, we recognize, and sustain the new government of Louisiana the converse of all this is made true. We encourage the hearts, and nerve the arms of the twelve thousand to adhere to their work, and argue for it, and proselyte for it, and fight for it, and feed it, and grow it, and ripen it to a complete success.

[VIII, 403-404]

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Chrysalis

MARY HAYDN WEBB

Across the room, the full blown hair,
The quiet face submerged in air,
The wind of voices overflows,
Depicts the delicate white rose.

I am not I, she says,
Or who or why
Do they come to me?

Soft honesty is in her lips,
The timeless world, the wood she grips
Comes splintering into her hand.
They hold her up, she cannot stand.

I cannot be, she says,
Why question me?
I try to feel. I fail.

She falls asleep, sleep in a stream;
Prismatically, life is a dream.
She has to swim, yet cannot drown,
Her hair is floating there, mud brown.

I do not swim, she says,
In soul or limb.
Here am I still. By will.
Why?

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The full blown hair will arrange, one day,
Itself, past fear or pain's delay,
And with the full but windless hair,
The calm and quiet face is there.

✪ MARY HAYDN WEBB is enrolled as a junior at the University of California, Berkeley. This is her first published poem.

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THE INVASION OF PRIVACY (3)

The Limits of Privacy

GRANVILLE HICKS

AS BOTH MY PREDECESSORS IN THIS SYMPOSIUM have recognized, privacy is not an absolute good. In some conditions it is an evil, and in others, more frequently encountered, its value is outweighed by conflicting values. The subject needs to be discussed in concrete terms, and that is my justification for drawing upon my own experience, in which two elements seem relevant to the investigation in which we are engaged: my years as a country dweller and my years as a Communist and an ex-Communist. If my onetime political commitments have led to my being confronted with the problem of privacy in a form that is currently of concern to many people, my rural life has shown me the problem in what may be regarded as its traditional aspects. Both kinds of experience have to be taken into account.

For most of the past twenty-five years I have lived in a house from which no other house is visible when the leaves are on the trees. I like this kind of privacy, the sense of space around me, the freedom from contact with masses of human beings. The building of a superhighway before my face and eyes, which is just possible according to maps I have seen, would be an invasion of privacy that I should find hard to bear.

Our privacy, however, has always been less than complete.

GRANVILLE HICKS, novelist and literary critic, has lived for the past twenty-five years in a small upstate New York community, about which he has written in *Small Town* and in various articles.

This article is the third in an AMERICAN SCHOLAR series devoted to discussion of the invasion of privacy. The first article of the series by Richard H. Rovere appeared in the Autumn issue; the second article, written by August Heckscher, appeared in the Winter issue.

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When we came to Roxborough, we took little interest in the people of the town, and we never asked ourselves whether the people took an interest in us. Of course they did, as we subsequently learned. Although they saw us only in the stores or in the post office, and perhaps as they drove past the house—passers-by were not numerous—they knew who we were and what I did for a living and how we were fixing up the house. They had, in fact, a lot of information about us, much of it perfectly accurate. I know now that many an evening we were gossiped about at the store, and what was known by some handyman we had employed became common knowledge.

Our situation was the exact opposite of the situation of a family living in a New York City apartment. The city dweller is surrounded by multitudes of people, none of whom, as a rule, knows or cares to know anything about him. Of the kind of physical privacy that I enjoy he has none, but there is no doubt that he lives a more private life than I do. Even twenty-five years ago, when we did not think of ourselves as members of a community, the community was scrutinizing our lives.

Inevitably we came to know more and more people in the town, and to realize that we had interests in common with these people, but we did not take much part in community activities until after I had resigned from the Communist party in the autumn of 1939. Being a Communist kept me busy with matters that, as a Communist, I believed to be more important than town affairs. Leaving the party changed my views on the importance of community activities, and the coming of war gave me large opportunities to engage in them. For the next eight or ten years I was into everything —working for civilian defense so long as it lasted, helping to establish a volunteer fire company, helping to build a library, campaigning for better schools. More recently I have limited myself pretty much to working for and in the library, which did at last get built, but for a while I was the picture of a busy citizen.

During the busy period my privacy was constantly invaded. People were always telephoning or dropping in to discuss plans, and there were meetings to attend almost every night in the week. Sometimes I grew weary of all the rushing about, but at no point did I lament the loss of privacy. I had asked for it, and I had no right to

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complain even if I had wanted to. But I did not want to because I was enjoying the experience of being an active member of a community and, I believed, was learning something from it.

Roxborough, when we came to it in the thirties, had been declining for a long time. Except for some tourist trade, there had ceased to be any local industry, and yet the town was a little too far from the nearest city to be safe, under the road conditions existing then, for commuters. But if the town had declined in population and wealth, its relative isolation had preserved many of its characteristics as an independent community. A considerable proportion of the residents had been born in the town, and these old-timers gave the community life its tone. There wasn't much formal community life then—the forties was the great period for the spawning of organizations—but the community was held together by the fact that so many of its members had a common past.

Even twenty-five years ago Roxborough was not a first-rate specimen of the old-fashioned community, but it had some of the traits. In such a community, I came to realize, privacy, even in some of the most intimate details of life, is virtually impossible; it is hard to have secrets from people who have known you from infancy. But depersonalization is also virtually impossible. In the old-fashioned small town nobody can be merely a name or a function; everybody is an individual. As I came to understand Roxborough as a community, I began to wonder whether the impersonality of our urban-industrial civilization did not represent a loss.

There is much to be said on the other side. The "revolt against the village," which frequently figured in novels forty and fifty years ago and even earlier, was based primarily on a resentment of the small town's invasion of privacy. No one, it was said, had a chance to be himself; everybody was constantly under pressure, and nonconformity could be heavily penalized.

That is not the situation we found in Roxborough. Although I was known to be first a Communist sympathizer and then an out-and-out party member, we were not ostracized, and there was just one rather petty example of persecution. (Even that may have been based on a personal sentiment rather than an actual objection to my political views.) Nor was the tolerance we enjoyed exceptional,

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for the townspeople seemed to be as unperturbed by unorthodox behavior as by unorthodox ideas. Couples living together out of wedlock were talked about, but the people who talked never seemed to think they ought to make a public show of disapproval. You couldn't expect your sins not to be known, but you could expect to be let alone.

Such latitudinarianism was probably not characteristic of the American small town in its heyday, and it may have been evidence of Roxborough's decay. Even in the stricter sort of community, however, there were values that I have come to respect. The individual was important to the community not merely as a voter, not merely as a taxpayer, not merely as a producer and consumer, but as a human being. The pious—and by no means everybody was pious even in the small towns of the nineteenth century—would have said he was important as a soul to be saved.

We have seen in the past fifteen years a great change in Roxborough, probably the greatest change since the breakdown of local industry at the turn of the century. During the war most of the able-bodied men who were not in the services, and many of the women, worked in the cities. Roxborough became a suburb, and that is what it has remained, with more and more city people taking residence here. It has retained something of its character because most of the people who come here are looking for small-town life and don't want to behave like city slickers. But people move in and move out, as they didn't in what we are tempted to look back on as the good old days, and unfamiliar faces are no longer a rarity. It used to be that I could say to the storekeeper, "Who's that?" and get a biography with genealogical trimmings. Now, as often as not, the answer is, "Well, I don't exactly know. They say he's bought the Charlie Brown place, or maybe he isn't the one after all."

There is more privacy in Roxborough than there was twenty-five years ago. People cannot keep track of their neighbors so easily, and in any case, having television to entertain them, they aren't so eager to do so. But has anything substantial been gained? Not that I can see. I can't think of anyone who is leading a richer life because he is less closely scrutinized by his neighbors than he would have been a while back. On the other hand, I am sure that something has

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been lost. Not only are community ties weaker than they used to be; there isn't so firm a grip on human realities. People learned more about people from listening to the talk in the store than they are likely to learn from watching television.

My observations in Roxborough have convinced me that an increase in privacy is not necessarily a good thing. But I realize that the people who are worried about current invasions of privacy are not, as a rule, concerned with neighborly curiosity. What does concern them is the sort of thing with which I have had some experience as an ex-Communist. Even here, however, my experience has not conformed to what appears to be regarded as the general pattern, and therefore it may be worth describing.

I became interested in communism as a result of the depression, and by 1932 I was a staunch fellow traveler. In 1935, obviously because of my Communist sympathies, although other reasons were given, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute refused to reappoint me as assistant professor of English. By that time I had joined the Communist party, and seeing no reason why I should not be known as a member, during the next few years I served as a party spokesman in a minor way. In the spring of 1938 I was given an appointment as counselor in American civilization at Harvard College, and when newspapermen asked whether I was a party member, I replied that I was. This caused something of a sensation, especially in the Boston press, and my activities throughout the Harvard year received a good deal of attention. Shocked by the pact between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, I resigned from the party the following autumn, stating my reasons in an open letter, and this action also was publicized.

More than a few so-called intellectuals joined the Communist party in the thirties, but most of them became secret members. Even in the relatively tolerant period before the war it was not exactly safe for a man with a job to have it known that he was a Communist; but in any case, the party encouraged secrecy. The American party, modeling itself on the prerevolutionary Bolshevik party, chose to be a conspiratorial organization, even though conditions in this country were obviously different from conditions in czarist Russia. By and large, only party functionaries let it be known that

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they were party members; others were supposed to conceal the fact as well as they could.

That is not the way radical parties had hitherto functioned in America. Radicals had taken pride in proclaiming their views, and if they were penalized, they took the consequences, finding compensation in the publicity given the cause. A case can, of course, be made for secrecy from the Communist point of view, but secrecy put the intellectuals in a difficult—as it turned out, a perfectly untenable—position. And the clandestine nature of the party has been responsible for great and abiding confusion in just this matter of privacy.

My becoming an open member of the party was a matter of naïveté and good luck rather than good judgment, but I have had many occasions to be thankful for it. There were various times, as I have said, when my activities were of interest to the newspapers. I was photographed and interviewed and written about, and now and then reporters went further than a decent regard for my privacy would have permitted. But on the whole I had little ground for complaint. The central fact, that I was a member of the Communist party, was, by my own volition, a matter of public record. There was not much that the reporters could do to hurt me, even if they had wanted to, and generally that did not seem to be their idea. In any case, I was willing to be hurt a little, for I felt that the cause was the gainer, not only because I had opportunities to expound my views, but also because in just that period, when the slogan of the party was "Communism Is Twentieth Century Americanism," it was perhaps useful to have it known that a mild-mannered and quite respectable individual, whose ancestors for a number of generations had all been born in America, was a Communist.

For a long time after my resignation from the party I ceased to be of interest to the press, but I was sought out by the F.B.I. and other investigating agencies interested in the information I might be able to give them about other persons. At first it came hard for me to co-operate with the F.B.I., but I became convinced by the party line during the period of Soviet neutrality—"The Yanks Are Not Coming"—and by the reversal of that line when Germany invaded Russia, that the American Communist party was completely

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subservient to the Soviet Union, and that party members were potential Soviet agents, even though it was unlikely that many of them were actively engaged in espionage. It seemed to me, therefore, that the government was right in trying to make sure that persons in important positions were not subject to Communist discipline. So long as questions appeared relevant, I answered them.

The inquiries of the F.B.I. obviously constitute an invasion of privacy, but it is an invasion I believe to be justified. Congressional investigations are a different matter. Happily I was let alone by the Congressional committees for a long time, but I was called before a private session of the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1952, and the next year before a public session. Again there was no question of an invasion of my privacy; so far as my own activities were concerned, I was called upon to reveal nothing that could not have been discovered by a study of the press. But I was asked to testify regarding the actions of others—in other words, to name names—and this I was reluctant to do, although I did it. I was reluctant not on theoretical grounds, but simply on the ground that the whole procedure seemed to me absurd.

That Congressional investigations may accomplish valuable results and that they must be given considerable leeway has to be granted, but the spectacle of three committees simultaneously investigating communism was ridiculous. The excuse, of course, was that the public needed to be made aware of the dangers of communism, but these dangers were vastly less than they had been ten or twenty years earlier, and large sections of the public already had a preposterously exaggerated view of them. The committees seem to me to have accomplished almost nothing, nothing certainly that could justify the amount of damage they did to innocent persons.

The invasion of privacy in the McCarthy era was an evil, but it was not the greatest evil of that unhappy period. "Hysteria" may be too strong a word for the mood that prevailed in the late forties and early fifties, but the judgment of masses of the American people was unhinged. There was a reckless disregard not merely of the rights of individuals but also of truth itself. Fear prevailed, and unscrupulous politicians fed it. Fortunately, as sometimes happens, excess brought reactions, and for a couple of years the public mood

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has been more reasonable. We have at least a breathing spell, a chance to meditate on what happened. I think we miss the point if we concentrate on the invasion of privacy.

I have approached the subject from two sides, and twice I have come to a difficult and ambiguous conclusion. I value privacy highly, and I deplore the many invasions of privacy of which I am aware. On the other hand, although my own privacy has been jeopardized in a variety of ways, I do not feel that it has seriously suffered. That I have few grounds for complaint does not mean that there is no evil to be combatted, but I wonder whether the evil has been clearly defined. What I find myself asking is whether the present concern with privacy isn't a disturbing sign of the times. I have no doubt that there is a problem to be dealt with, but perhaps we are tackling it the wrong way.

Complete privacy is a condition that may be valuable, through limited periods of time, for saints and great creative artists; but to most of us, who have only the ordinary human commitments, complete privacy means complete irresponsibility, which in turn can mean the extinction of the personality. Most people do not in the least want complete privacy; many, in fact, like Selah Tarrant in Henry James's *The Bostonians*, want a lot more publicity than they are getting. What the average person wants is, as always, to eat his cake and have it too—to have publicity when publicity would flatter or otherwise benefit him, and to have privacy when publicity would embarrass or otherwise hurt him.

In a tightly knit community, privacy is limited in many ways, but the limitations are rarely resented, because it is taken for granted that they are essential to the life of the community. In the larger society what makes the invasion of privacy so painful is its impersonality: intimate details of your life are fed into a business machine; the investigator who may get you fired hasn't the slightest interest in you as an individual; the photographer who infuriates you with his persistence is merely doing a job. Yet it is clear that a great society cannot function, any more than a small town can, without some invasion of the privacy of its component parts. If we try to take our stand on some absolute "right to be let alone," we only

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succeed in confusing the problem. What we need is a philosophy of society and the individual, a rational formulation that will do for the large community what tradition does for the small one. I have no illusion that such a philosophy is easily arrived at, but that is the way to approach the problem.

So far as the determination of political policy is concerned, the key word is not privacy but responsibility. The secret ballot is, of course, to be cherished; if people are to vote as they choose, they must have the right to vote in secret. Yet our political life would collapse if all men, or even if very many men, insisted on regarding their political views as a private matter. It is the individual who must make the decision; society must not coerce him. But a responsible individual will recognize that representative government is impossible without a free and constant interchange of opinions. He must be willing to state his views, even if they are unpopular, and stand by them.

Again and again the invasion of privacy is less important as an evil in itself than it is as an indication of larger evils. If Congressional investigating committees run wild, there is something seriously wrong with the political and intellectual life of the nation. If government agencies insist on asking questions they do not need to ask, we had better start worrying about the growth of bureaucracy. Sensational journalism would have a bad smell even if it invaded nobody's privacy.

The question is where we are to take our stand. As I began by saying, and as I have tried to demonstrate, privacy is not an absolute good. When people talk as if it were, I am afraid they are looking for an easy way out, and there are no easy ways out. Any particular individual may have valid reasons for wanting to withdraw from the fight, but he is not offering much in the way of a solution for the problems we all face.

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Encounter

JOHN OGILVIE

Water drooped from nowhere and was lazy
In serried pools, stirring no question; air
Sank among close tangles hot and hazy;
Light shook to heavy points . . .
By such a place
You came unbidden late one afternoon and saw
Rigid behind dissolving leaves a face
Fixed in an ancient stare,
Your own and not your own. Time sphered
And held you stranger to yourself. A paw
Struck heavily in dust: no other sound
But a rustle of dry weeping
And the far-off shutting of a door.

The face flared out in stone, then at a stab
Of lifted breeze, collapsed and disappeared.

The wood was stiller than before:
Silence thickened like clotted water seeping,
And like a slab
The night came down.

✪ JOHN OGILVIE, an instructor in American literature and creative writing at Williams College, has published poetry in a number of literary periodicals.

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"Best Answers" or Better Minds?

BANESH HOFFMANN

AT A TIME WHEN THE AMERICAN PUBLIC is anxiously realizing that our very survival may depend upon the training we give our gifted youngsters, we dare not leave unchallenged the methods for detecting this talent.

This article is about multiple-choice tests; it does not praise them. These tests are now used throughout the country to sift and appraise our youth. Many people are accepting test scores with the blind pseudoscientific faith that afflicts those who cannot see beyond imperfect statistics to the facts the statistics obscure. But how many of those who put their faith in multiple-choice tests have ever examined these tests critically or wondered whether they really do what they are assumed to be doing? How many have weighed the damage these tests do to young minds by rewarding superficiality and penalizing depth and intellectual honesty? How many have considered the corrupting effects of these tests on the whole of our educational system?

I am told that a question somewhat like this appeared in a certain test:

Emperor is the name of
(A) a string quartet
(B) a piano concerto
(C) a violin sonata

This seems to be a simple, straightforward question. The average student quickly picks answer *B* and proceeds untroubled to the next question, perhaps feeling elated at being given so simple a test. But what of the superior student? He knows of the Emperor Concerto of Beethoven, but he also knows of the Emperor Quartet

© BANESH HOFFMANN, a professor of mathematics at Queens College, Flushing, New York, is now on leave at King's College, University of London. The author of *The Strange Story of the Quantum,* Mr. Hoffmann worked with Albert Einstein at the Institute for Advanced Study.

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of Haydn; and his knowledge puts him at a disadvantage, for because of it he must pause to weigh the relative merits of *A* and *B* while his more fortunate, less well-informed competitors rush ahead.

In this particular case the superior student does not ponder long. Two theories occur to him: the examiner is malicious, or the examiner is ignorant of the Haydn work. If this is the first dubious item that he has encountered on the test, he inclines to the second alternative and chooses answer *B* with little delay.

Yet even in this simple case he suffers a penalty far exceeding the slight loss of time. For he has been led to call into question both the good will and the competence of the examiner; and this subjects him to a psychological handicap, the severity of which will depend upon how faulty or impeccable is the rest of the test. It is no longer possible for him to skim innocently ahead. Instead, he must proceed warily and dubiously, ever alert for intentional and unintentional pitfalls. And whenever he comes to a question for which he, with his superior ability, sees more than one reasonable answer, he must stop to evaluate afresh the degrees of malice and incompetence of the examiner. Such a test becomes for the superior student a highly subjective exercise in applied psychology—and, if he is sensitive, an agonizing one.

Let me illustrate how painful and upsetting this mistrust of the good will and competence of the examiner can be. To do this it is necessary to set a trap, for which I beg the reader's forgiveness in advance. Consider the following multiple-choice question, which is not an unfair imitation of test items of its type. The problem is to pick, from among the five choices, that pair of words which best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole when the first word of the pair is inserted in the first blank in the sentence and the second word of the same pair is inserted in the second blank in the sentence: The American colonies were separate and . . . . . entities, each having its own government and being entirely . . . . . .

(A) incomplete—revolutionary
(B) independent—interrelated
(C) unified—competitive
(D) growing—organized
(E) distinct—independent.

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Your response to this question will be colored by your attitude toward me. Suppose I had not warned you that I was setting a trap. Then you would doubtless quickly pick answer *E* on the grounds that "separate" calls for "distinct," and "having its own government" for "independent," while with doubtful choices, such as *B*, the second word offered throws the obvious meaning of the sentence into complete confusion.

But I did warn you that I was setting a trap. And this makes you wary and less confident. How good does answer *A* seem when you examine it more critically, bearing in mind the possible existence of intentional or unintentional pitfalls? The word "distinct" does not contribute significantly to the sentence. After "separate" it seems almost unnecessary, except as the completion of a cliché.

Perhaps redundancy is being asked for, since the directions do call for the words that best fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole. This is a comforting theory. But the trouble with it is that one does not know the meaning of the sentence as a whole till one knows the whole sentence. So the call for redundancy is by no means clear.

Besides, there is the word "independent." Although it does, at first glance, seem to go with "having its own government," thereby contributing a further element of redundancy, can you ignore the force of the word "entirely" that precedes it? "Entirely" is a strong word. Is it likely that I included it accidentally? (Actually I included it intentionally.) Were the colonies "entirely" independent? Were they not rather "interdependent"? Come to think of it, what about the word "colonies" itself? Does it pertain to the period after the War of Independence? If not, then the colonies were not independent of the crown, and therefore certainly not "entirely independent." The force of that "entirely" might have escaped you had you thought there was no wile in the question. But now you are deterred by it; and worried, too, by the tautology that would result if you ignored it and chose *E* on the assumption that "independent" was meant to imply only a limited type of political independence corresponding to the fact that each colony had its own government.

Since answer *E* begins to look dubious when you subject it to

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mistrustful scrutiny, you now examine the other choices again. But the "entirely" spoils them all, and you declare that there is no correct answer.

Unfortunately, this does not release you from the requirement of making a specific choice. The rules of this particular type of multiple-choice question call on you to pick the "best" answer, even though having to do so is a hardship when no answer is even good.

How do you go about picking the "best" answer here? Perhaps you reject answer *B* on purely grammatical grounds, since "each" does not go well with "interrelated"—although you could not safely do even this had there been a grammatical error in the directions. You then study the other answers carefully, trying to decide which one is least objectionable. Suppose in the end you realize that answer *D* is that one. You still cannot help worrying whether answer *D* was the one you were really supposed to pick, for you find yourself involved in a subjective guessing game, wondering not which answer is intrinsically the "best" but, instead, which answer the poser of the question may happen to think is "best."

Perhaps this is not a simple, straightforward question of the sort that you would be happy to see on a multiple-choice test. But it is certainly not a grossly unfair caricature.

* * * * *

Actually the above question is taken verbatim from a descriptive booklet, *Scholastic Aptitude Test,* published in 1956 by the College Entrance Examination Board. The question is number 17 and it appears on page 24, where it is said to be "easy because the answer words directly parallel the meaning of words already in the sentence." The wanted answer is *E,* and the reasons given to justify this choice are, except for minor paraphrase, those in favor of *E* that I presented immediately following the question.

I have tried this question on several of my colleagues. Some pick answer *E* and are taken aback when I point out, for example, the force of the word "entirely." But what is significant is that, by and large, those who work in relevant fields, such as history, sociology and English, complain spontaneously that the question is de-

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fective, and that when they are pressed for a definite choice of answer they tend to favor *D*. They see little merit in *E*; and when they are told that this is the wanted answer and that the question is intended to measure scholastic aptitude, they become quite vehement about its shortcomings.

Here is a convenient tool for an interesting experiment. Show this article to a colleague, especially one with a feeling for words; let him read as far as the line of asterisks, and then ask him his opinion of the question. Had you shown him this question in the booklet *Scholastic Aptitude Test*, he might have been biased in its favor, believing that any question regarded as easy by an outstanding group like the College Board must surely be free from serious defect. When you show him the identical question as here presented, you remove this possible bias, perhaps replacing it with an opposite one—yet a legitimate one, for it corresponds roughly to the bias of the student who has found cause to mistrust the good will or competence of his examiner.

Not all people who study the above question regard it as seriously defective. But this fact does not make it acceptable. If a sizable number of qualified, intelligent people believe a question to be so worded that the wanted answer is unacceptable, we already have sufficient reason for branding the question defective, for there will be intelligent examinees who will realize the same thing, and they will be penalized for their perspicacity.

The question just discussed is by no means the only defective one appearing in official booklets describing College Entrance Board examinations. Yet I am officially informed that the questions in the booklets are taken from actual tests, most of the questions being copied verbatim, and the remainder being presented with small editorial changes. Through the courtesy of the Educational Testing Service, which prepares these tests, I have been permitted to study an actual scholastic aptitude test of the College Entrance Examination Board. Naturally, I may not reveal its contents; but I may record my opinion that the booklet *Scholastic Aptitude Test* gives a flattering rather than an unflattering portrayal of the actual tests it describes.

Test questions undergo an elaborate process of pretesting. Since

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the questions included in the descriptive booklets have been subjected to a further screening, one would expect to find among them, at worst, no more than an occasional slip. If one could demonstrate that a significant number of defective questions appeared in the descriptive booklets, there would be cause for concern.

I have prepared a detailed analysis of some of the more strikingly defective questions in official booklets of the College Entrance Examination Board. One question, for example, when interpreted so as to make the wanted answer acceptable, turns out to have five correct answers. Of the five, the wanted answer is the most superficial, being a direct and demonstrable consequence of another, which in turn is a direct and demonstrable consequence of a third, which in its turn is on a par with, if not strictly a consequence of, a fourth. The whole question is, therefore, a trap for the superior student and a reward for the superficial one.

I wonder how many admissions officers in our colleges have scrutinized the tests on which they partly base their decisions—and I mean the actual tests, not just the statistics about them. When I presented to the admissions committee of Queens College some questions taken from College Entrance Examination Board booklets, members of the committee found it a salutary experience. There was wide disagreement as to choices of answers; and when a member happened to pick a wanted answer, he was unable to justify his choice to the satisfaction of the rest of the committee. The members were particularly impressed to see a professor of English failing questions on English composition.

There are many objections to multiple-choice tests. Even if the tests were constructed with impeccable draftsmanship and were free from all ambiguities and errors, they would, in my opinion, still have serious defects as testing instruments, especially when applied to creative persons and to some of those people who, despite impressive gifts, do not shine at parlor games. For by their very nature, these tests tend to favor the pickers of choices over the doers, and the superficially brilliant over the creatively profound. Moreover, the use of these tests has a baleful influence on teachers and teaching.

Some test experts with whom I have discussed these matters

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concede that the superior students may not score as high as their brilliant but more superficial competitors on College Entrance Board tests. These experts defend the use of these particular tests on the ground that the test score is but one of several items considered by admissions officers, and that since what one might refer to as the passing grade is purposely kept low, the superior students will not be excluded from college on the basis of their test scores.

This defense boomerangs, however, when applied to the practice of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. For that organization, faced with a large initial group of candidates that is supposed to contain the cream of the intellectual crop, relies heavily on multiple-choice tests to eliminate the vast majority of these candidates from any further consideration. One sympathizes with the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, confronted as it is by a staggering task. Yet considering that the candidates are far from being run-of-the-mill students, and that the scholarships are intended for some of the very best students in the country, one must deplore such heavy reliance on multiple-choice tests.

Many intelligent people share my concern regarding the defects of multiple-choice tests. But test experts tend at times to brush our criticisms aside as the opinions of outsiders, or as idle thoughts lacking a basis of scientific evidence—by which they mean statistics, of which they are very fond.

But statistics are not a substitute for intellectual standards nor a shield against all types of criticisms. To make a clear-cut issue, I have prepared my analysis of specific questions taken from College Board booklets as a public challenge to the test experts.

If, to a significant extent, my critical analysis survives the rebuttals of the test experts, then I will claim not only that there is prima-facie evidence for the proposition that the College Board tests should be viewed with concern, but that if this concern is justified in the case of products of the Educational Testing Service, which is acknowledged to be outstanding in its field, then one can tentatively assume that similar tests made by other organizations should also be viewed with concern. Moreover, considering the source of the questions, the statistical processes through which they were passed by the test experts, and the broader doubts that significant defects

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in them must cast by implication, I will claim that there is prima-facie evidence for the need for a full scale inquiry into the whole field of testing for aptitude and ability.

How should such a study be made? I suggest, as one possibility, that scholarly organizations of the highest repute, such as the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Philosophical Society, the Modern Language Association, and the National Academy of Sciences, to mention but four, appoint a committee to look into the whole matter. The committee should include creative persons of commanding intellectual stature. Only a minority of the committee should consist of test psychologists or professional test makers, for the function of the committee would be to examine the situation from a fresh point of view, with special regard for the interests of those gifted young people whose talents do not conform to the statistically based norms of the multiple-choice testers. The committee should request access to confidential tests whose detailed contents may not be aired in public. If the committee agreed that, in principle, multiple-choice tests are admirable but felt that more care was needed in drafting them, it might remain in existence and supervise the policing of these tests to ensure that they meet appropriate standards. If, however, a significant proportion of the members of the committee concluded that multiple-choice tests are inherently defective no matter how well they are drafted, that fact alone should be regarded as sufficient reason for seeking to set up an alternative system of testing that would break the tightening stranglehold of multiple-choice tests on our educational system.

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Science in the Liberal Arts

DAEL WOLFLE

IT IS NOT UNCOMMON TO HEAR SOMEONE SAY with smugness and even a touch of pride, "I don't know a thing about science." Even among faculty members one sometimes encounters a complacent ignorance of most things scientific. Dr. James R. Killian tells the story of a faculty meeting that was deciding the fate of those students who were failing in one or more of their courses. When it was announced that a student named Cicero was failing in Latin, everyone laughed. A little later, when it was announced that a student named Gauss was failing in mathematics, only the scientists laughed.

Stories are also told about the fact that scientists, too, are sometimes ignorant in fields outside their own areas of specialization. I owe my favorite to William E. Dick, editor of the British magazine *Discovery*. He quotes a delightful anecdote from Lord Moulton, a brilliantly versatile patent lawyer who encountered a solitary German scientist on top of a mountain. As Lord Moulton tells the story:

> I found he was a chemist, and I began to talk upon a chemical subject. He told me he was only an organic chemist. He had not exhausted my resources, and I began to talk of coal-tar and pharmaceutical products. Then he told me he was a coal-tar by-product chemist. That did not beat me, because I had just been fighting a case of canary yellow. I thought I would get some subject that was common to us, and I slipped into the subject of canary yellow. Still the same ominous silence for a time, and then he said, "I am only a coal-tar chemist dealing with blues." But I had not finished. With an Englishman's pertinacity, not

✪ DAEL WOLFLE has served as the chief executive officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science since 1954. Previously he directed the Commission on Human Resources and Advanced Training established by the National Academy of Sciences, the Social Research Council, the American Council on Education and the American Council of Learned Societies.

This paper was presented at a symposium on New Directions in the Liberal Arts held at Mary Baldwin College in April, 1958.

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believing I was beaten, I racked my brains for a coal-tar blue—I had had to advise on some case—and I gradually, without a too obvious change of subject, slipped into that. Then he finally defeated me, because he said in equally solemn tones, but equally proud of the fact, "I deal only with methyl blues."

I would not present this specialist on methyl blues as a typical scientist. Yet the fact that the story has enough reality to be told is indicative of the fact that scientists sometimes retreat into narrowness of specialization. Note, however, that it is other areas of science about which this chemist was ignorant. He may or may not have had a fair knowledge of music, the arts and other subjects. Quite possibly he did have, for many scientists do, if for no other reason than that most of them have had a substantial amount of work in the liberal arts during their college years. Remember that the scientists as well as the humanists laughed when it was reported that Mr. Cicero was failing in Latin.

There is, of course, better evidence than these anecdotes of the fact that there are some very real differences between the sciences and the liberal arts as those subjects are generally taught. We have, I am convinced, suffered a very substantial loss in allowing education in science to grow away from education in the liberal arts. When experimental science was young it was part of the liberal arts. But as science grew, as it became of greater practical importance, as it became necessary to train a substantial number of professional scientists, a widening gulf developed between what is usually thought of as a scientific education and what is usually thought of as a liberal education.

This difference has, I believe, been more largely the result of a major difference in attitude on the part of teachers of science and teachers of the humanities than the result of differences in the subject matters involved. Of course I am oversimplifying, but let me point out a fairly widespread difference between the two groups of teachers. The teacher of science knows that his subject matter is of very great importance to the welfare of the world and that it is the foundation of the whole vast field of applied science, in agriculture, in medicine, in engineering and in other fields of applica-

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tion. He knows, too, that a considerable number of his students will follow careers in science or applied science.

The teacher of the humanities also knows that his field is important; but there is, nevertheless, a contrasting attitude toward students. The teachers of music, of history, of English or of art expect only a few of their students to follow professional careers in these fields. Their teaching, in consequence, is not as vocationally oriented as is that of the science teacher. Their aim is to produce educated men and women rather than to produce professional musicians, historians, English scholars and artists.

This difference in attitude leads to different kinds of courses and different methods of instruction. The teacher of a humanistic subject attempts to develop those intellectual virtues that we traditionally associate with the liberal arts. First is the notion of breadth. As distinct from training that is primarily concerned with relatively narrow specialization, liberal education is broad in scope. It may include chemistry or history or any other discipline, but it goes beyond the borders of a single field or even a closely related group of fields. Second, liberal education involves the idea of depth. A course of instruction does not merit the label of liberal education unless it goes beyond the superficial to give a depth of understanding that includes the why, as well as the what and the how, of whatever is being studied. In the third place, liberal education gives the student exercise in reasoning and thinking for himself; it teaches him to ask questions, to criticize, to examine his own thinking, and to form conclusions that he can discuss and defend, but that he can also change.

The teaching of science may also exhibit these characteristics, but frequently it does not. The more immediately useful a field is thought to be, the greater is the temptation to teach practical information; and when this fare seems dull, the temptation is to compound the fault by making the teaching even more down to earth and practical. So college catalogues are crowded with such courses as household physics, chemistry for nurses, psychology for salesmen and mathematics for consumers. Rarely—perhaps never—in such courses does the student gain much in breadth or depth, nor through

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skillfully handled discussion is he led to an understanding of how and why he reached a conclusion.

To the extent that teachers of science are preparing their students for scientific work, they frequently get so obsessed with the importance, the complexity and the vastness of science that they dislike to see a student graduate with any gaps in his knowledge. So the textbooks get thicker and thicker, the print gets smaller and smaller, and the courses fuller and fuller. The teacher is so busy giving information that he has no time to explain and evaluate and criticize, and the student is so busy learning facts that he has no time to question and digest and think critically. This is a serious shortcoming of much teaching of science, for it represents an objective that is impossible of attainment. The ever growing body of scientific knowledge makes it increasingly impossible to teach all of it to any student, and the attempt to do so is a self-defeating effort.

These are serious shortcomings of much teaching of science, but they are not necessary shortcomings. For the truth is that the characteristics of liberal education are also characteristics of science—not of all the people who call themselves scientists and not of all courses in science, but of science itself, of what we call scientific method, and of the thinking of the great scientists. Important scientific advances exhibit the penetrating depth, the critical, inquiring attitude, and the logical reaching of conclusions that we hope to achieve as products of a liberal education; and frequently, too, they exhibit the scope and sweep of imagination that we attribute to liberal education at its best. The teaching of science can be broad. It can provide depth in selected areas. And it offers almost unequalled opportunities in the development of reasoning.

If we are to achieve these characteristics, however, many of our science courses must be changed, and so must the thinking of many of our science teachers. To start with, let us accept the fact that most students who enroll in elementary biology, physics or chemistry, or in freshman mathematics courses, are not going to become scientists; they are sampling a subject in which they think they may be interested, or they are fulfilling a college requirement that

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says they must have a certain number of hours in science. In a liberal arts college, the students who are never going to become scientists constitute the large majority. What is it that will contribute most to their education? Although I cannot answer this question in detail here, let me suggest the lines along which I think it should be answered. In the liberal arts kind of science course, we must select a limited number of areas of science to be included; there is no need to try to cover everything. Selected topics can be used to teach what science is and how the scientist works, to teach something of the history and philosophy of science, to give an understanding of the nature of science and of its beauty and elegance. There are several models in existence. Conant's "On Understanding Science" and the related general course in science at Harvard is one model. Another is provided by the excellent and up-to-date course in physics being developed by the Physical Science Study Committee at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

These courses are not easy to develop or to teach. They require the combined efforts of several scientists, usually representing different fields of science. They require the ruthless omission of some of the things that we want future scientists to learn. But in compensation we can have courses that make a greater contribution to the liberal education of our students and that provide a kind of intellectual fare that will remain with the student long after he would have forgotten a collection of facts and principles. If we want a student to appreciate the main streams of intellectual thought, we must certainly include science in his education. But if we want him to appreciate and understand science, we must avoid overwhelming him with a collection of facts, and we must give him time to understand science in its broad perspective and to incorporate into his own intellectual life some of the traditions, the philosophy, and the manner of thought of science.

So far I have been justifying the inclusion of science in the liberal arts curriculum on the grounds that the education of the individual student would be enriched thereby. This is perhaps justification enough for the effort that is required to develop the

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type of science course I have briefly sketched. But there is another reason to develop such courses, and one of great urgency.

The scientist's search for fuller understanding of the forces of nature has been so richly rewarded in recent decades and his fuller understanding of those forces has resulted in so many practical applications that there is a grave and growing danger to society in not understanding science. When science was less important than it is now, it was all very well to leave science to the scientist. It was perhaps stupid to say smugly, "I don't know a thing about science," but it was not dangerous, for all that one was relegating to the limbo of his own ignorance was a fascinating but not very practical branch of learning. But now it is dangerous as well as stupid to take such an attitude, for what one is doing is to turn his back on the forces responsible for the control of disease, the extension of life and the explosive increase in the world's population. Such a person is shutting himself off from the fields of knowledge that are responsible for the synthetic fibers in which he is clothed, the gadgets that make his life easier, the processes and devices that speed industrial production, multiply agricultural output, and bring the world of amusement and current events into his living room. He is dissociating himself from the basic sciences that have brought us to the threshold of exploration beyond the borders of earth and air that have confined man's wanderings for the whole of previous history, and that have produced weapons of such destructive power that a single trigger-happy pilot or missileman could wipe out his city in one blazing flash. He is saying that he knows nothing and cares nothing about the methods of thought that are responsible, more than any other, for changing the world in which he lives and that show, as well as any other, the genius of the human intellect at its best.

Science has become the chief instrument of power in the world, power that can be used constructively or destructively. Decisions about the proper use of that power cannot and should not be made by scientists alone; in a democratic society such decisions are the proper responsibility of educated men and women of all walks of life. The decisions cannot be made wisely unless the men and

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women who make them understand something about the forces with which they are dealing.

Every man cannot be a scientist any more than everyone can be a historian, a linguist, an artist or an economist. Yet every educated man and woman knows something of history, something of economics, something of the traditions and cultures of other people. He knows these things because they are part of his intellectual heritage, part of his general education, part of his equipment for discharging his responsibilities as an informed and educated citizen. Science has become an instrument of such power in the world that it is essential that the educated citizen also know something of science—not the specialized knowledge of the professional scientist, but the general understanding of principles, of trends, of major developments that in other fields we think of as being proper parts of a liberal education.

Science has now become of necessity what it once was by virtue of interest, an essential part of the liberal arts curriculum.

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REappraisals

Thornton Wilder: The Notation of the Heart

EDMUND FULLER

Thornton Wilder has to his credit one of the greatest novels (*The Bridge of San Luis Rey*) and one of the greatest plays (*Our Town*) in this century's American writing. The rest of his body of work is consistent in quality. Success has visited him: he is a Pulitzer Prize winner in both fiction and drama; his plays have had packed houses; one of the novels was a best-seller. Yet, proportionate to his achievement, this man's stature is singularly overlooked or taken for granted. Until quite recently three of his five novels, all of them among the best American writing, had been out of print for years, and even *The Bridge* was not in hard covers.

He has had his due more among the drama critics than among those who study the art of prose fiction. In the books that talk of the contemporary American novel, where a fixed set of names is bandied about among a fixed set of critics, Wilder seldom is discussed. Malcolm Cowley is a notable exception, having written an excellent essay as Introduction to *A Thornton Wilder Trio* (1956), which brought back into print the first three novels.

✪ EDMUND FULLER, a member of the faculty of Kent School, is a critic, editor and novelist. He is the author of a number of books, the most recent of which is *Man in Modern Fiction*.

Excerpts from the novels and plays of Thornton Wilder are quoted by permission of the author and his publishers: *The Bridge of San Luis Rey, The Cabala, The Woman of Andros* (Albert & Charles Boni, Inc.); *Our Town, The Ides of March, The Matchmaker, The Skin of Our Teeth, Heaven's My Destination* (Harper & Brothers).

This curious general neglect is partly because literary critics tend to inherit their subjects, passed along from one group to their successors. Within the contemporary field, one echelon seldom has the imagination to study someone whom the preceding echelon has ignored. Due to a socioeconomic accident, Wilder was slighted by most critics practicing in the thirties and, accordingly, has not received attention since that time to any extent commensurate with his importance as a novelist.

The strange public history of *The Bridge of San Luis Rey,* its abrupt drop from acclaim to neglect, is worth pausing to examine. The book became a best-seller and a Pulitzer Prize winner. Malcolm Cowley remarks, wrongly I believe, that this success is "still a little hard to understand, for the best qualities of *The Bridge* are not those usually regarded as being popular." It "exactly fitted the mood of the moment, and nobody knows exactly why."

Public response often is surprising and hard to explain. The stylistic excellences and subtleties of thought and observation in this novel are not mass commodities. Yet greatness, which this book possesses, is never in itself a bar to popularity, given other viable elements. Shakespeare was a mass artist, and a substantial number of fine books make the best-seller list.

The Bridge is short and wonderfully lucid reading, with a simplicity hardly suggesting its extensive substrata. The question that the fall of the bridge thrust upon humble Brother Juniper: "Either we live by accident and die by accident, or we live by plan and die by plan"—in short, whether

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the events of life are chance or design—presents itself intensely, even agonizingly, at some time in almost every life. Thus it is that the Marquesa de Montemayor sometimes would be "dizzy with despair, and . . . would long to be taken from a world that had no plan in it." Consciously or unconsciously, from the French existentialists to the beat generation, this is a major psychic problem of the hydrogen age. The unlettered and the educated alike ponder the question in their own terms. It is a problem that presents itself as much amidst plenty as at any other time, which is why the book spoke to the anxieties beneath the boom of the flush twenties.

Another basis of the book's appeal is that its characters are sufficiently strange, colorful and remote to be fascinating, yet they are so universally human in their qualities that we can identify ourselves with them. Its original success and its re-emergence are gratifying, but not mysterious.

The book's abrupt eclipse (which engulfed all of Wilder's early novels) is a peculiar story. When the depression struck, the dreary wave of "social" novels, "protest" novels, "proletarian" or Marxist novels was ushered in and caused a corresponding literary depression, both in creation and criticism. What was possibly the best single book of that genre, *The Grapes of Wrath,* does not survive the passing of its topicality as well as *The Bridge* survives its temporary, circumstantial eclipse. I am one of many who came of age in the early thirties, heard *The Bridge* spat upon as bourgeois, escapist, popular pap, and had to find it for myself after depression and war had passed and writers had again discovered that the problems of man are not narrowly topical, or uniquely and exclusively centered on the masses, on workers or even on soldiers.

Wilder is unique among modern American novelists for possessing in the highest degree certain qualities currently undervalued and hence desperately needed among us. No one of his countrymen rests his work upon such an understructure of broad scholarship, cultivation and passion for the beauty and integrity of the English language. This equipment, rare in our time, gives tone to his work, especially the novels, and yet brings with it no taint of pedantry. To find work equally rich in allusion and grounded in humane learning, we must turn to English-born Aldous Huxley, although Wilder employs these attributes even more gracefully and unobtrusively than he. In a period when literary honors are bestowed often upon the craftless, the semiliterate and uncultivated, and in which the Yahoo has become hero, we need to recall that we have Wilder working among us. He helps to redeem the time.

He is notable for his versatility. Although he is not the only man writing both the novel and the play, no one else has written both at such a level of excellence, in such a marked diversity of modes, or in such form-renewing and form-extending ways as mark his work in the two media.

Wilder is a conspicuous exception to the common generalization that American writers tend to be youthful, writing of and from youth and immaturity, failing to mature in art as they age in years. He juxtaposes his always mature vision of life and character to our predominantly adolescent literature, while his range is greater than that of those established men who are most nearly his peers. There is an immense spread between the sophistication of *The Cabala* and the homely simplicity of *Our Town,* and Wilder is comfortably at home in both.

He is neither compulsive in his choice of material and method nor conditioned by some warped piping from a private clinical world. His view of life and behavior is broadly encompassing and humanely compassionate in the only true compassion, which is blended of sympathetic perception and clearly defined values.

He has the highest development and conscious control of style—having no close rival among Americans in this respect—yet he spelled out the limits of style in *The Bridge,* in a passage about the Conde's relish for the famous letters of the Marquesa de Montemayor (which are like those of Mme. de Sévigné):

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. . . he thought that when he had enjoyed the style he had extracted all their richness and intention, missing (as most readers do) the whole purport of literature, which is the notation of the heart. Style is but the faintly contemptible vessel in which the bitter liquid is recommended to the world. The Marquesa would even have been astonished to learn that her letters were very good, for such authors live always in the noble weather of their own minds and those productions which seem remarkable to us are little better than a day's routine to them.

It is in this "whole purport of literature . . . the notation of the heart" that Wilder's genius is felt, and the flexible grace and individuality that attend his work in both his chosen media proceed from that "noble weather" of his own mind.

The novels are dazzlingly epigrammatic —a word that often carries with it a suggestion of glibness that does not fit this work. The epigram is a stylistic device, a perfectly shaped single thought, calculated to arrest attention and then, at its best, to start thought moving in a fresh direction. Such ability to shape and state things is sometimes given to shallow minds who waste it on minor witticism. In Wilder this gift is coupled with penetrating perception and wisdom. It helps him to communicate the depth and sharpness in which he sees character, motivation and impulse, and the significance that he discerns in things.

Wilder's work is permeated by a profound mystical and religious sensibility—too mature to war upon or sneer at orthodoxy, too creative to fit snugly in its confines. His vision and celebration of man is harmonious with Christian humanism. He gives us a *creature,* touched with the divine image, but scarred and maimed somewhat in his human state, perishable in his flesh and eternal in his soul; a creature variously perverse and responsible, despicable and indomitable, vulgar and rarefied. The separateness of these attributes remains blurred in Wilder's work as it is blurred in the creature and in the creature's self-understanding. Applying here some words from the Foreword to his first volume of short plays, *The Angel That Troubled the Waters,* "there has seldom been an age in literature when such a vein was less welcome and less understood."

He has been publishing and producing intermittently since 1926, and there is no reason to suppose that we have heard the last from him. His productive years, to date, span the time from his twenties to his late fifties, so he has been walking in step with his century. The reference of his work is always universal, regardless of its period identification. In times of depression and war he has not occupied himself with the obviously topical that commands attention sometimes to the temporary exclusion of all else. His nearest approach to the topical —the perennial topicality of the catastrophic—was in *The Skin of Our Teeth,* cast in such imaginative terms as to baffle literal minds.

Wilder is absorbed, always, with one or more of what, in *The Ides of March,* Caesar calls "the first questions which one puts to life itself." Or, as in *The Woman of Andros,* "How does one live? . . . What does one do first?" His answer is: one loves, if one can.

Of the master ideas or themes, threaded through and through the whole body of Wilder's work, certainly that of love is foremost. He is concerned with identifying its nature and its kinds, the modes of its operation, and the follies and waste associated with it. His is a conspicuous depth of insight at a time when many novelists have lost, or repudiated, the knowledge of love, offering violences, abuses and perversions of the body as substitutes for love rather than as violations or corruptions of it. In such modes, even the nature and meaning of simple passion itself are distorted, and the limited range of passion is unremarked.

In one of the most luminous passages of *The Bridge,* Wilder looks into the secret heart of the Perichole, who is marred by smallpox and convinced that love is forever lost to her.

This assumption that she need look for no more devotion now that her beauty had passed proceeded from the fact that she had never realized any love save love as passion. Such love, though

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it expends itself in generosity and thoughtfulness, though it give birth to visions and to great poetry, remains among the sharpest expressions of self-interest. Not until it has passed through a long servitude, through its own self-hatred, through mockery, through great doubts, can it take its place among the loyalties. Many who have spent a lifetime in it can tell us less of love than the child that lost a dog yesterday.

One of his three-minute plays, exercises in that compression that Wilder prizes so highly and has mastered so well, the play that lends its title to a whole volume, *The Angel That Troubled the Waters* (1928), contains the words: "In Love's service only the wounded soldiers can serve."

In the polished and precocious first novel, *The Cabala* (1926), two of his characters, Astrée-Luce and the Cardinal, reach a terrible spiritual impasse. When they

> . . . discovered that they were living in a world where such things could be forgiven, that no actions were too complicated but that love could understand, or dismiss them, on that day they began their lives all over again.

The failure to love is the failure to realize life. Wilder is pained at how we fumble love, fail in realization, often through no worse a sin than perennial human blindness—that proverbial blindness that is never so great as in those who will not see.

So in that poignant scene of *Our Town* in which the dead Emily ventures to return to live over again her twelfth birthday (a scene anticipated in *The Woman of Andros*), there comes the girl's anguished cry, "Let's look at one another." And a moment later, ". . . it goes so fast. We don't have time to look at one another . . . I didn't realize. So all that was going on and we never noticed." Then follows the great question and answer:

> EMILY: Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it?—every, every minute?
>
> STAGE MANAGER: No. (*Pause*) The saints and poets, maybe—they do some.

It is the waste of love and life that pains Chrysis, the woman of Andros: "She did not realize that this wasting of love in fretfulness was one of the principal activities on the planet."

The crowning of this theme of love is in *The Bridge*. Nothing but burning rewards the gentle Juniper for his naïve attempt to fathom the secrets of God and "surprise His intentions in a pure state." Unresolved though it must necessarily remain, this question of chance or design gives shape to the novel, from the opening chapter, "Perhaps an Accident," to the closing one, "Perhaps an Intention." Yet if Juniper's search for "an intention" fails, Wilder still develops subtly for us the possibility of an intention of some kind on the part of One who moves in a mysterious way, in a design infinitely more intricate than the too simple equation the monk had sought (like Job) between a man's moral qualities and the things that happen to him.

Whether it is the reason for the event or not, there is indeed a sense in which, as Juniper had speculated, each of the five lives lost made up a perfect whole when the bridge fell. The Marquesa, Pepita, Esteban, Uncle Pio and even, in a special sense, the boy Jaime, who must venture out to face the world with the burden of epilepsy—each had been through a crisis of decision and commitment, or moral self-realization and responsibility, and above all, a crisis of love. Accordingly, perhaps, now each can be permitted release—for death is often so viewed by Wilder, without negating his affirmation of life.

If any intention underlies the fall of the bridge, it cannot involve only the lives ended—it must involve also the lives remaining. So it is that Captain Alvarado, the Perichole, the daughter of the Marquesa, and Mother María del Pilar, all are enlarged in grace and comprehension. It is of the love of God toward man that the Abbess speaks, saying to herself, "Now learn, learn at last that anywhere you may expect grace."

The true burden of the book is disclosed in its final line:

> There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning.

This is the bridge that does not fall.

Human life as Wilder shows it is a web

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of folly, faith and tenacity. The folly is always present—a constant in the human character. As Dolly Levi says, in *The Matchmaker,*

. . . there comes a moment in everybody's life when he must decide whether he'll live among human beings or not—a fool among fools or a fool alone.

In *Our Town,* the Stage Manager reflects:

Wherever you come near the human race, there's layers and layers of nonsense. . . .

Folly, both of the lighter and the grimmer orders, is threaded through that fantastic synopsis of the race's history, *The Skin of Our Teeth,* summed up in Sabina's cry,

We're all just as wicked as we can be, and that's the God's truth.

But Wilder is a gentle, not a savage, observer of folly. He blends folly with faith in the extravagant, picaresque, evangelical adventures of George Brush, the hero of *Heaven's My Destination* (1935). This fourth novel is startlingly different, in manner, method and material, from the other novels. Its tone is that of his plays, and I have wondered if, at some stage in its gestation, it may have hovered between the two forms. It is high parody, in somewhat the vein, and with the same deceptive simplicity, as *Candide* or *Joseph Andrews.* There is even a touch of the Sinclair Lewis of *The Man Who Knew Coolidge.*

George, who is a textbook salesman and evangelist extraordinary, is the innocent fool, in the kindliest sense of both the noun and the adjective. He is striving to be the fool in Christ, sowing the inevitable amazement, consternation and wrath that must ensue when Christ's fool runs at large among the worldly wise. This, in dark tones, was the concept underlying Dostoevsky's *The Idiot.*

Wilder's George is also "the perfectly logical man," fulfilling conviction in action, practicing his preaching. To understand him it is necessary to observe the quotation from *The Woman of Andros* that Wilder uses as a text in the front matter of *Heaven's My Destination:* "Of all the forms of genius, goodness has the longest awkward age."

For all the sophistication that underlies the creation of George Brush—indeed, that was essential to it—Wilder loves this innocent and will not consent that we should do otherwise. His is the awkward age of a true goodness. Simple, it is; stupid, it is not. Nor is it easy. George suffers his own bitter crises of faith, and his occasional cry of "I don't want to live" is a genuine anguish. Among the most subtle and interesting devices of the book is the unseen figure called Father Pasziewski, seemingly comic in his context, but who becomes, through the simple bequest of a silver spoon, the instrument to free George from his darkest night of the soul. In this border terrain of folly and faith, Wilder sounds a cautionary note to the George Brushes of the world through Judge Carberry:

Go slow; go slow. . . . The human race is pretty stupid. . . . Doesn't do any good to insult'm. Go gradual.

Reflecting the perennial tension between faith and reason, we are told that Astrée-Luce, in *The Cabala,* has "goodness without intelligence." Her frustration is that "Sainthood is impossible without obstacles and she never could find any." Yet this wholly nonintellectual woman is capable of "remarkable penetrating judgments, judgments that proceeded from the intuition without passing through the confused corridors of our reason."

The Cardinal Vaini, in the same book, who makes a grave miscalculation as a spiritual director in dealing with her, has his own soul crisis after being retired to Italy from his lifetime work in China.

Living is fighting and away from the field the most frightening changes were taking place in his mind. Faith is fighting, and now that he was no longer fighting he couldn't find his faith anywhere.

It is this same Cardinal, by the way, in Wilder's early anticipation of the modern dilemma of blurred values in the midst of an advanced technology, who says, with wry reservations about the attainments of the age:

You want me to compliment you because you

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have broken the atom and bent light? Well, I do, I do.

But whether the follies of man be those of the subtle mind or the simple, or even those of the wicked, there is an amazing tenacity in the creature. It is this tenacity that is celebrated in *The Skin of Our Teeth* (1942), one of the most wildly creative, antic and imaginative plays of the modern theater. It stunned to befuddlement its early audiences, but it has captured increasing command over playgoers ever since, here and abroad, as the appalling march of modern society has made us more and more sensitive to the threatened chaos. Wilder has observed, correctly, that it plays best in times of crisis. He says, by the way, that it is heavily indebted to *Finnegans Wake,* which is apparent, and is perhaps sufficient rebuke to me for an abiding prejudice against that work.

The play pours out for us, in tumbling fantasy, the total, sprawling, blundering chronicle of Man. We see it in a multiple vision which superimposes the Pleistocene, the Flood and the ages since, upon present-day New Jersey.

Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus (the pun is inescapable), the complaining but durable Sabina, and the children, including the troublesome Cain (re-named Henry, but the same boy), are indomitable. Mrs. Antrobus, at the end, amidst the wreckage of war, cries to her husband:

> . . . the only thought we clung to was that you were going to bring something good out of this suffering. In the night, in the dark, we'd whisper about it, starving and sick.—Oh, George, you'll have to get it back again. Think! What else kept us alive all these years? Even now, it's not comfort we want. We can suffer whatever's necessary; only give us back that promise.

George Antrobus says:

> All I ask is the chance to build new worlds and God has always given us that. And has given us voices to guide us, and the memory of our mistakes to warn us.

He turns the leaves of a book.

> We've come a long ways. We've learned. We're learning. And the steps of our journey are marked for us here.

As in this play, so in all his work Wilder delights in making free with time and space, as well as all sequences and juxtapositions of history. He treats time not so much in the Greek way, as cyclic, but as if all time is always still present. We might call it the simultaneity of all time. He translates the Marquise de Sévigné from seventeenth-century France to eighteenth-century Peru, to reincarnate her as the Marquesa de Montemayor. He gives us the dying John Keats in twentieth-century Rome, and embodies there, in *The Cabala,* certain of the Olympian gods in latter-day decline, and calls up the shade of Virgil. In *The Ides of March,* we find the extraordinary, bedridden American playwright, Edward Sheldon, on the isle of Capri, metamorphosed into the fearfully maimed Lucius Mamilius Turrinus. This most intimate friend and confidant of Caesar, once well favored of the gods but now brought low, is, like Sheldon, mentor and dispenser of wisdom to a host of talents more fortunate than himself.

Applying this free movement as a playwright, Wilder has helped to liberate the stage of our period from the strait jacket of the box set. He discusses this aspect of his intentions in the Preface to *Three Plays* (1957), which is a valuable, brief essay on the relationship of things to themes in the theater.

Certain of his one-act plays are preparatory studies for the major dramatic works. They test the essential "round" pattern that characterizes *Our Town* and *The Skin of Our Teeth,* the spirit of which might be vulgarized as "here we go again." Thus the short plays are a valuable study in the development of technique and idea, as a set of variations in music may be seen sometimes as part of the growth of a work.

The Long Christmas Dinner telescopes ninety years into a single meal, as *The Skin of Our Teeth* traverses all the ages of man in three acts. The latter play's procession of planets and hours has a trial run in *Pullman Car Hiawatha.* And in this, and in *The Happy Journey to Trenton and Camden,* plain chairs are made to serve as whatever setting is needed. *Pullman Car Hia-*

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watha also has a versatile, chatty Stage Manager, all in anticipation of *Our Town*. The pullman car stops at "Grover's Corners," but the long later play relocates this from Ohio to New Hampshire. The emotional final sequence of *The Happy Journey* resembles in tone the intimate home scenes of *Our Town*. Finally, in *Pullman Car,* a dead young woman makes an itemized good-bye speech to persons and places anticipating Emily's tender good-bye to the world and Grover's Corners.

In speaking of these experiments in time and space, Wilder defined the purpose that informs all of his work in all media—the attempt "to capture not verisimilitude but reality." This is pregnant with counsel for an over-literal age of letters, bogged down often in the narrowest naturalism, or worse still and even more prevalent, pseudo naturalism. Wilder's is that truer realism, unconfined in its means, seeking, as he said of *Our Town,* to "find a value above all price for the smallest events in our daily life." He achieved this aim uniquely in that play.

Wilder has a deep affinity for the ancient world; and apart from much allusion to it in all the works, he has turned to it for time and place in two of his novels. He did this first in the gentle, lyric, lovely *Woman of Andros,* set on the isles of Greece in that time when "the land that was soon to be called Holy prepared in the dark its wonderful burden."

It is in *The Ides of March* (1948) that we get his most ambitious image of the ancient world, in the most intricately constructed and ambitious of all the novels. Its spaciousness of concept creates a sense of a much larger work, physically, than it is in fact. Nowhere is his self-avowed "passion for compression" more successfully operable.

Here he takes his familiar liberties with time sequence and literal, factual matters, but he gives us a sense of a living Rome and a living Caesar. Through the difficult and adroitly practiced device of imaginary letters and documents, he evokes the most complex Caesar that I know in any work of art. This Julius' closest relative is Shaw's—that is, both are created in indifference to historical actuality as idealizations of a point of view (a device of the classical historians as well, as witness Herodotus' famous dialogue between Solon and Croesus). These Caesars have in common a detached, deliberative calm, and the relationship of each of them to Cleopatra is dominated primarily by a "passion for teaching." Yet Shaw's Caesar is a one-dimensional cartoon, withal brilliant, while Wilder's is complexly human with the special dimensions of genius.

Caesar's reflections on Roman society cut sharply into our own.

> . . . the ostentation of vulgarity has become a political factor with which I must deal. The plebeian world is ameliorable in itself, but what can I do with a plebeian aristocracy? . . . it's now smart to talk pure *pleb*.

The book is rich in its meditations upon liberty and rule, freedom and responsibility, interest and disinterest in public actions. The dual study of Caesar and Catullus (wholly as fanciful as Solon and Croesus) puts before us the statesman vis-à-vis the poet. Catullus is, in a sense, one face of this Caesar who says

> . . . one of the things in this world that I most envy is the endowment from which springs great poetry. To the great poets I ascribe the power to gaze fixedly at the whole of life and bring into harmony that which is within and that which is without them.

Is this not the transcendent aim of the great statesman?

> I think there is only one solitude greater than that of the military commander and of the head of state and that is the poet's—for who can advise him in that unbroken succession of choices which is a poem? It is in this sense that responsibility is liberty; the more decisions that you are forced to make alone, the more you are aware of your freedom to choose. I hold that we cannot be said to be aware of our minds save under responsibility. . . .

The Ides of March is a text so rich that it requires exploration rather than reading.

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Wilder's love of the ancient world, however, is not a flight from the modern one. He has been wise about that from the first. The returning American narrator of *The Cabala* is advised by Virgil, as he leaves Rome: "The secret is to make a city, not to rest in it."

Perhaps, finally, with Wilder, after love comes beauty as the second great theme. He said, in the Foreword to *The Angel That Troubled the Waters,* speaking of religion as a subject in art, ". . . in these matters beyond logic, beauty is the only persuasion." He has made it the instrument of his own persuasion in all matters. This may be what has shaped his style. The stamp of taste and the sure sense of the precise and subtle gradations of meaning that come with mastery of language and that are the essence of beauty in the written word are firmly in his possession.

And with beauty comes praise. Praise of life is constant with him. He knows the sometime kindness of death. He has the vision of something beyond death. He can remark the pain of living, as he gives words to the shade of Virgil:

> Are you still alive? Alive? How can you endure it? All your thoughts are guesses, all your body is shaken with breath, all your senses are infirm and your mind ever full of the fumes of some passion or another. Oh, what misery to be a man. Hurry and die!

Yet, like a descant over all his melodies, is the note of praise, and the thirst to hear things praised, sounded at the most painful times.

One of the dead, a woman, in the poignant dual vision of the famous graveyard scene in *Our Town,* is reminded of childbirth, and remarks, with almost a laugh,

> I'd forgotten all about that. My, wasn't life awful
> (*With a sigh*)
> —and wonderful?

Emily herself, retreating from the pain of her return on her twelfth birthday, ends her cry of farewell to all people, places and things of life, with:

> Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you.

In *The Cabala,* the narrator visits the bedside of the dying poet (Keats transposed). He wounds the suffering man unintentionally by a casual slur upon Chapman's Homer, and so

> discovered that he was hungry for hearing things praised . . . the poet wanted before he left the strange world to hear some portion of it praised.

Again, in *The Ides of March,* Caesar at the bedside of another dying poet, Catullus, observes:

> I am no stranger to deathbeds. To those in pain one talks about themselves, to those of clear mind one praises the world that they are quitting. There is no dignity in leaving a despicable world and the dying are often fearful life was not worth the efforts it had cost them. I am never short of subjects to praise.

Thornton Wilder, wise observer and celebrant of life, speaks in the dying courtesan, Chrysis, of Andros, as she is making "the most exhausting of all our adventures . . . that journey down the long corridors of the mind to the last halls where belief is enthroned." As she goes this course, she reflects:

> I have known the worst that the world can do to me, and . . . nevertheless I praise the world and all living.

So, likewise, does Wilder, in the total body of this humane notation of the heart that is his work. In this shrewd, sometimes caustic observation of *genus homo* and his history, we find one of the most searching, balanced and mature visions of ourselves as Man that any American writer offers us.

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. . . . . *The Scholar's Scratch Pad* . . . . .

Some Music From the Spheres

HARLOW SHAPLEY

I am looking at my crystal ball—a sphere —so crystal, so transparently composed, that many of you cannot see it. Can you, sir? Or you, sir? No imagination! I shall use it for a small adventure in horoscopy. I shall try to make an approach to a horoscope for the human race. At first glance I see trouble ahead. I see a confused, lonely man off the fairway in a sand trap, gazing wistfully at a distant putting green. I see dark forms, menacing figures, dancing in the shadows of the bordering woods.

Is there not someone to help select what iron to use; someone, not imprudent, to plan the approach? If there is, this lonely man needs him. From now on, will it be just one damned sand trap after another?

Turning the crystal ball a little I seem to see a broad land full of laughing but worried people. They also are in the rough, and confused; they seem to have wandered unwittingly off the fairways. They search for a cause thereof; did they slice, did they hook? They search for a scapegoat to blame for their loss of general directitude, and only slowly do they begin to recognize that they are their own scapegoats. They begin to fear that never again can they, in the light of recent disclosures, pretend to a nationally practiced political virtue. Ah! Imprudence! Meanwhile the dark figures dance gleefully in the shadows.

I do not like what I see in this crystal ball, this 1958 model. Let's put it aside and try this larger one, the 1970 model. Strange and weird things now appear; I am unable to understand them fully or even partially. Much is obscured by social smog. Apparently by 1970 another small but useless war has been fought. Already atomic energy courses through many of our power lines. The Near East states are sinking back into their natural feudal corruption. Brave new attempts to reorganize the world have temporarily prospered—and collapsed again because interracial humanity is only skin-color deep. The cult of being led around submissively has grown in prevalence. The dignity of the individual is less talked about. It is a sad, sad picture, and it leads me to want to break that cloudy crystal ball to bits. Let's build one nearer the heart's desire. Let's consider further the here and now, and tomorrow.

With deliberate follow-ups of action, we may defeat that 1970 horoscope. By 1970 we may even stop dichotomizing the intellectual enterprise, stop opposing those words "science" and "humanities." We may unqualifiedly revere knowledge, and the pursuit of it; we may habitually make an integrated approach to learning.

But I cannot keep my thoughts off the

✪ Author of many works on astronomy, recipient of numerous awards and medals, and a member of the Editorial Board of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, HARLOW SHAPLEY was director of the Harvard Observatory from 1921 to 1952.

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distant future. I dreamily wonder what this universe will be a thousand years from now. To appease me and my desires, therefore, I shall sketch two themes.

One could well be labeled "Damnation," the other "Redemption." The first sketch will refer to attempts at the pandemic damnation of the human race. How might man's career on this planet be terminated, and the biology of the earth returned to the durable clams, kelp and cockroaches, which dominated the lands and seas for hundreds of millions of years before the human experiment got under way?

I have looked rather carefully into this matter of terminating man, with a surprising result; namely, it appears to be a hard job to shake him off. He is an ingenious critter, and in his relatively large forebrain he may figure out escapes from extinction—escapes from what appears to be coming to him soon and inevitably—soon, on the cosmic time scale.

No one of us who has thought about it expects man as we know him to be on this planet a million years from now. Let's base our speculations on the much better chance that he could still be here, in spite of hell and high water, ten thousand years from now—that is, one hundred centuries from this epoch. Our dealing with the future will take both logical analysis and imaginative poetry—it will take science *and* the humanities intermingled.

Life on this planet now depends completely on the sun for its continuity, as it depended on the sun some three or four thousand million years ago for its origin. To meet our need, the sun must stand by for one hundred centuries and remain steady. Explode the sun and you expire the biology of this planet. Dim the sun and you damn the man.

The sun's fuel supply of hydrogen is very great. At the present rate it will shine benevolently for billions of years, rather closely thermostated throughout that time. The stars are so remotely scattered from one another that a lethal star-sun collision is out of reason for much longer than our ten thousand years. If the nearest star, Alpha Centauri, were aimed directly at us, which it isn't, and were approaching as fast as one hundred miles a second, which it isn't, it still could not get to us in one hundred centuries—stars, you see, are so isolated in the ocean of space. Also, the sun is of a calm variety, with no likelihood of explosion.

The earth moves in a stable orbit. There is no chance, our celestial mechanics tell us, that it will break loose, escape from the sun, and freeze to death out in empty interstellar space. And there is no chance that it will spiral into the sun and perish of temperature. Equable climates for the next hundred centuries—this is my forecast.

We see no way, therefore, of clearing the earth of Homo sapiens through the misbehavior of stars, of sun or of earth.

Could the seas rise (high water) or the land sink (hell) and drown us out? This is not at all likely. We have had continents and oceans for more than half a billion years, and there is no likelihood of serious change in the land-water relation in the next ten thousand years.

How about the atmosphere? It is safe. The inert gas argon is slowly increasing, and possibly the life-building oxygen molecules also increase in number, but both at a very slow rate. Carbon dioxide from the volcanoes and from industry? There is too little to bother us when it is diluted in our quintillion tons of salutary air.

I could spell out in some detail the dangers to man from wild beasts, from insects, from fungal growths, and even touch on microbes and disease germs. But all these have been thwarted in the past in their attempts to eliminate Homo, and they can be thwarted in the future if we retain something resembling our current culture.

I am glad to report that it looks pretty safe on this planet for ingenious man—safe, that is, but for one horrible threat. Man has a deadly enemy at his throat—one that may succeed in returning the planet to the clams, kelp and cockroaches.

The enemy is, of course, himself. Man's worst foe is man. We all know how, with

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man-made bomb concussions, with radiations and poisons, that cruel enemy can carry out his lethal enterprise. Poor Homo! It would be so wasteful to do him in. He is such a nice animal, so kind of heart at times, so cute, so remarkably put together, with opposable thumbs that have created art, and roving eyes that have provided posterity; with his sweet vocal cords, his powerful forebrain. It *would* be too bad, for he is so well-equipped to appreciate the universe—its beauty and its cosmic music.

On happier planets, which circle stars in grander galaxies, the most highly sentient beings may have solved this problem of suicide or survival. I wonder if we could do something about it by giving heavy thought to the matter. I wonder if we shouldn't do something. At least we might start programs that aim specifically at our retaining possession of the planet for the remainder of this century—programs that aim to let us hold on long enough to provide that our near, dear posterity may enjoy something of what we have enjoyed.

So much for the Damnation theme. Now some words on Redemption—on a practical redemptive plan. Many years ago, in the thick of our second blind world war, I wrote an essay entitled "A Design for Fighting." It was, strangely enough, printed in this magazine, the *American Scientist*, the *Atlantic Monthly* and two anthologies. But nobody enlisted for the fight. Scarcely anybody, that is, and those few who did were rarely in the front lines. There was some talk about it, however, and perhaps some good did come of my simple suggestions. I am now inclined to revise that design somewhat, or at least dust it off and try again for a sale.

The argument in "A Design for Fighting" was simply that we should note that man is recently from the jungles. We should observe that we are still animals rather than angels. Fighting comes naturally. In fact, it has in the past been highly advisable to fight, whether our enemies, real or imagined, were beasts or demons. We grew up because we did fight. Now, with a nostalgic look back to those brave, naked and brutal days, and another look at today's jungle man all dressed up in a dazzling culture, we still find the need of enemies to be comfortable and progressive.

There is no sense, however, in losing our lives and our civilization by fighting each other, by fighting *within* the species. We need *outside* foes that we all fear and hate, some terrible common enemy that we instinctively dread. It might bring the human race together. We will unite when the danger is fearsome enough.

My first thought, naturally, is to encourage the Martians to try to clean us Terrestrials out of the solar system. That would unite Yank and Slav and Hindu and Jap—everybody. But apparently the Martians are jellyfish when it comes to fighting, or, more likely, they are fungoidal sedentaries. There is no fight in them. And actually, of course, they do not exist. There is, to be sure, a hypothesis that they do, but it would be no fun fighting a Martian hypothesis. It would not get us together and eliminate intraspecies strife. The Venusians, on Venus, are equally impotent.

Where can we find an enemy that would rally us all to the colors? There are many, all of varying potentiality: human disease, the most obvious; human hunger; economic slavery; illiteracy; blind suspicion. The Great Enemy is the Tyranny of the Unknown. That Tyranny, which feeds on superstition and ignorance, could be overthrown if we had a workable will and a will to work.

If we were reasonable, rational and well-minded, we could oppose some of these enemies with gusto, and we might bring peace and understanding to the species as a by-product.

The scientists have shown the way in that magnificent operation, the International Geophysical Year—sixty-six nations ambitiously working together to solve common problems. The sciences involved are: oceanography, meteorology, volcanism, glaciology, seismology, antarctic exploration and exploitation, ionospheric physics, solar radiation, magnetism, cosmic ray intensi-

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ties, and satellites. Work proceeds effectively with the scientists. In the I.G.Y. we co-operate; in the U.N. we expostulate.

But back to the Design. Let's continue indefinitely some of the International Geophysical Year's co-operations. It will cost us something, but, for next year, it would cost considerably less than a futile battleship. And let's undertake, either along with many nations, or with the U.S.S.R. alone, other "international years" where full co-operation and complete communication can be practiced. What about an international medical research year or an international cultural exchange year? We should all willingly ponder and work for such Homo savers. Certainly we must continue to promote defenses against the devilish devices of man's worst enemy.

So saying, your agent from the galaxies deflates the 1970 crystal ball as well as this 1958 model. And he reminds you again, dear Brutus, that it is not in our stars but in ourselves that we shall find salvation.

CORRECTION

Race: Science and Politics by Ruth Benedict was reissued in January as a Compass Book by the Viking Press, *not* as an Anchor Book by Doubleday, as incorrectly stated on page 33 of the Winter, 1958-59, issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So. . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

The year 1956 marked two centenaries, oddly assorted but not without connection. After all, Mozart and Shaw both made Don Juan a hero, and the second thought so highly of the first that he called Sarastro's arias "the only music ever written which would not be out of place in the mouth of God."

This year again offers two centenaries, again one hundred years apart and even odder in conjunction: *Rasselas* and *The Origin of Species*. Still, in this case also, it is not too farfetched to note one similarity. Both are moral works in intention as well as in effect, for however "pure" Darwin's original intention may have been, one need read only the concluding paragraphs of *The Origin of Species* to realize that he foresaw and approved what so many were soon to accept as a death blow to theism in any significant form.

Huxley may have more carefully dotted the *i*'s and crossed the *t*'s, but the tinge of wishful thinking is plain in both. Both had been understandably irritated by the obscurantist meddling of theologians in scientific discussions—and both felt that the surest way to get rid of this once and for all was to strike at the root. As Darwin wrote in a suppressed but recently recovered passage from his autobiographical sketch, he could not understand how anyone could want Christianity to be true.

Rasselas proclaims a mystery at the heart of man and the universe: "Every beast that strays beside me has the same corporeal necessities with myself: he is hungry and crops the grass, he is thirsty and drinks the stream; his thirst and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied and sleeps; he arises again and is hungry; he is again fed and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest; I am like him pained with want, but am not like him satisfied with fulness. . . . Man surely has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification. . . ."

Darwin, instead of proclaiming and accepting a mystery, announced the end of one. The Middle Ages had believed that logic and metaphysics demonstrated the existence of God; the eighteenth century, including the author of *Rasselas*, believed that the strongest argument was the historical one embodied in the vast literature of Christian evidences. But by the nineteenth century, metaphysics was distrusted and Christian evidences had been eroded away by historical criticism. Nothing substantial seemed to remain except the "argument from design." "The existence of a watch presupposes the existence of a watchmaker. And how much more intricate is living nature than any watch!" But living nature, said Darwin, can do what a watch cannot. It can make itself, and the grand theory of natural selection shows how. The necessity for a watchmaker remains; the necessity for a creator directly responsible for man has faded away. Man is an animal who became what he now is because it was inevitable; because, for clearly demonstrable reasons, he could not help doing so. The universe runs itself. Newton had shown how the inanimate part of it could do just that; Darwin, so at least he thought, had shown how the animate could do the same.

Neither Newton nor Darwin saw any logical necessity for denying the possible existence of an aboriginal creator. Newton, of course, spoke of him with genuine faith; Darwin with what may or may not have been merely a willingness to make a conventional concession when he wrote in the very last sentence of the *Origin*: "There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several

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powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved." But a creator who thus completely retired from the universe billions of years ago and, if he still exists, exists only in some Lucretian isolation and indifference, is no longer of any importance. As for what Johnson called "some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification," man simply could not possibly be cursed with anything of the sort because utility is the sole criterion recognized in the course of natural selection, and a desire for which there is no possible gratification cannot be useful.

If the author of *The Origin of Species* ever expressed any opinion of Johnson or of *Rasselas*, I do not know of it; but by a curious coincidence Johnson dismissed Darwin in advance. Although he had died too soon to have heard much, if anything, of even Charles Darwin's evolutionist grandfather Erasmus, he was acutely and scornfully aware of Lord Monboddo's hope that, sooner or later, a race of human beings still equipped with tails might turn up. And upon Monboddo he made one of his most rotund pronouncements: "Sir, it is all conjecture about a thing useless, even were it known to be true. Knowledge of all kinds is good. Conjecture, as to things useful is good; but conjecture as to what would be useless to know, such as whether men went upon all fours, is very idle."

But *The Origin of Species* had an effect that neither Monboddo nor grandfather Erasmus could have had, just because it was presented not as speculation, but as truth very persuasively demonstrated. And the effect has been, in the long run, perhaps greater than that of any theory promulgated since Copernican astronomy.

As late as Monboddo's time the most often read book on the subject of man's place in nature was still the century-old *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation* by the first great English biologist, John Ray. Now Darwin banished from the universe not only God responsible for these works, but also all wisdom of any sort, whether imminent or transcendent. And along with it went any possible meaning for such concepts as "purpose" and "meaning"—to say nothing of justice or virtue. Mere survival was left as the only conceivable *summum bonum*, the only criterion for any value judgment.

For more than a century the discovery and the contemplation of God's wisdom as manifest in the work of his creation had been the most generally proposed aim or justification for the study of nature. Neither this aim nor this justification any longer existed, and the only justification necessarily became the pursuit of a greater and more intimate familiarity with that unvarnished truth which, unpalatable though it might be, was supposed to be capable of setting men free from false hopes. Not only Darwin, of course, but Huxley also had moments of trying, in one way or another, to mitigate this bleak view. Both men were aware of the problem of values in an inhuman universe. Huxley could, on occasion, take refuge in the "I don't know" of his convenient new word "agnostic." But it is the bleakness that has triumphed. And it is a strange paradox that Darwin, who had, in his early days at least, so much of the loving warmth that was characteristic of the old naturalists, should have been responsible for the coldness that has seemed to so many biologists since his time the only respectable attitude.

Perhaps the modern view of the universe as no more than a battlefield upon which a struggle for survival is going on between a thousand different kinds of organisms, each mechanically perfecting itself as it perseveres in its attempt to eat while remaining uneaten as long as possible, actually is a tenable one. Perhaps nothing unifies the animate world except the universality of the struggle; and perhaps, therefore, nothing that could be called a general, over-all plan or tendency is present. But if this is true, then the modern concept strikes

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me as curiously similar to a very primitive one.

In the late Robert Marshall's *Arctic Wilderness* I happen to have read very recently his brief account of the Eskimo "world view" as it was explained to him by an old-timer. "Tobuk told me about the 'dooneraks' who were something like spirits, but a little less personal, and who were responsible for everything. . . . There were thousands and thousands of dooneraks, each with different ideas and objectives, often thoroughly antagonistic, and the happenings of the world represented the balance between their innumerable objectives."

Substitute for dooneraks the isolated wills to live of innumerable species, and the mere melee that results is very similar to Darwin's world. Moreover, if the Darwinian balance of nature is much like the balance achieved by the dooneraks, the two systems are also similar in the extent to which man may intervene and in the methods he must use to do so. Tobuk further confided to Mr. Marshall that "some order was brought among their chaotic competition through medicine men whose accomplishments always came through the dooneraks whom they controlled." Substitute for medicine men, controlling few or many dooneraks, biologists who know more or less about "the control of nature through a knowledge of nature's laws," and the general concept is much the same. Medicine man and biologist both play God in the absence of any God to play Himself. The chief difference between the two systems is that Tobuk would never have supposed that the anarchy of the dooneraks would somehow result in a steady progress toward perfection!

"It is the customary fate of new truths to begin as heresies and to end as superstitions." Thus said Thomas Henry Huxley himself. Has the theory of natural selection as the one and only truth about the nature of things come at length to illustrate that very dictum? Many, probably most, contemporary biologists reply with a firm "No." We have learned, they say, much more than Darwin knew. He believed some things that are not true—notably that acquired characteristics were inheritable—and he was ignorant of much, especially of the importance of mutations and the whole subsequent science of genetics. But new knowledge only confirms the all-sufficiency of his central contribution: natural selection is the sole and completely adequate explanation of evolution from protozoa to philosopher.

Yet even among scientists there are some who confess a certain degree of skepticism —not a doubt that natural selection operates and is important, but that it explains everything. Working hypotheses do not have to embody the whole truth in order to be exceedingly useful. It is obvious enough that the theory of natural selection served as a master key that opened the door upon innumerable secrets. But the time often comes when the working hypothesis bars the door to still further discoveries, as at last did the Newtonian hypothesis that every particle of matter in the universe behaves exactly like every other particle. Modern physics would be impossible if that once useful hypothesis had not been recognized as requiring qualification. And it is possible that too stubborn a faith in the adequacy of natural selection now stands in the way of new knowledge about the processes of life.

If one dared to go into metaphysics, difficulties of another sort might be raised. If nature knows no purposes and makes no value judgments, and if, at the same time, man is himself a part of nature, then from whence came his concepts of purpose and value? If they come from nature, then they are part of nature. If they do not come from nature, then man himself is touched by something outside nature's realm. The concept of purpose must be either imminent or transcendent.

This is an argument hardly to be entered upon lightly, and it would be better perhaps to turn instead to Dr. Johnson again as an illustration of a very fundamental premise so different from that of most modern men as to explain a great deal about the difference between the world of Darwin

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and the world in which Johnson lived: "The truth is that knowledge of external nature, and the sciences which that knowledge requires or includes, are not the great or the frequent business of the human mind. Whether we provide for action or conversation, whether we wish to be useful or pleasing, the first requisite is the religious and moral knowledge of right and wrong, the next is an acquaintance with the history of mankind, and with those examples which may be said to embody truth, and prove by events the reasonableness of opinions. Prudence and Justice are virtues and excellences of all times and of all places; we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance."

Today the vast majority of thinking men assume without argument that "knowledge of external nature" is the great, the frequent and almost the only legitimate business of men. It is, they think, upon such knowledge of external nature that both our safety and the prosperity by which we set so much store depend. We are not perpetually moralists and geometricians only by chance. We have become geometers perpetually and moralists only by chance—if at all.

The most obvious result of the decision to consider knowledge of external nature the greatest, the most frequent and perhaps the exclusive business of the human mind—actually quite well formulated before Johnson's time—is the physical world in which we live with all its wealth, power and convenience, as well as its perhaps illusory security. The second most obvious result is the loss of Johnson's faith that "Prudence and Justice are virtues and excellences of all times and all places," with the substitution for it of the various relativisms that have persuaded us to believe that prudence and justice are merely the traditions of a given society and that a moralist is merely a man who has not yet learned that morals are only mores.

Although Johnson was no doubt thinking only of the physical sciences, Darwinism is merely an extension of them. One more result of the conviction that "knowledge of external nature" is, in fact, "the great and exclusive business of the human mind" is the Darwinian world in which man is merely an animal, and the animal merely a machine.

Between the two centenaries to be celebrated in 1959, there yawns a gulf that we may or may not someday cross again.

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Criticism: Whence and Whither?

HAZARD ADAMS

Recently we have seen three well-known academicians, all of whom have been closely associated with the new critical movement, produce histories of literary criticism. William K. Wimsatt, Jr., and Cleanth Brooks's *Literary Criticism: A Short History* (Knopf, $8.95) appeared in 1957. Two years previously, René Wellek produced the first two volumes of his *History of Modern Criticism* (*The Later Eighteenth Century* and *The Romantic Age*, Yale, $5.50 and $6.50), and sections of the two volumes that will complete the work have been appearing here and there in the quarterlies. These productions alone are not enough to hang a theory on; but if we consider that several other books on modern criticism have recently appeared, perhaps it is possible to reach some conclusions about where criticism recently has been and presently is, if not where it is going. The point is that criticism now seems to be asking these questions of itself. It is too early yet to determine whether Professor Wellek's marvelously encyclopedic and properly pedantic work will end with an assessment of the present state of criticism and the direction that it is now likely to take; his history is more descriptive than polemical, and it is most often the polemicist who predicts or offers a road into the future. Professors Wimsatt and Brooks, in their admittedly polemical work, provide an epilogue suggesting a road or, more nearly, defending an idea that extends their own.

Along with these two rather larger works there have been recent attempts to analyze the immediate background of contemporary critical theory. Two of these, Murray Krieger's *The New Apologists for Poetry* (Minnesota, $4) and Frank Kermode's *Romantic Image* (Macmillan, $3.75) are particularly interesting. In the first place, one is an American, the other an English book. In the second, each tries once and for all to sort out the actual trends in contemporary criticism—especially the influence of romantic critical theory—and give each its relative importance. In the third, each concludes on a somewhat wistful note. The questions implied on the one hand by the creation of histories by men so close to the new critical movement, and on the other by the appearance of critiques of contemporary criticism closely analyzing its sources, suggest that criticism itself has arrived at one of those periodical moments of crisis. Where did it come from and where will it go, these writers seem to be asking.

In respect to the first question, Krieger and Kermode are particularly interesting. Once and for all they answer the question of whether and how romantic theory has influenced contemporary criticism. Taken together, their chapters on T. E. Hulme (Krieger's is more closely argued, while Kermode's is more spectacular) effectively show how the immensely influential Hulme stole from romanticism while at the same time he attacked it and vigorously professed classicism. Proceeding to T. S. Eliot and I. A. Richards, Krieger examines the confusion of a similar mixture of influences. Kermode, on the other hand, examines English symbolist theory and practice in Arthur Symons and W. B. Yeats, argues that the famous "dissociation of sensibility" of Eliot is a common theory in one form or another among the earliest romantics, and concludes by demonstrating the influence

✪ HAZARD ADAMS, assistant professor of English at the University of Texas, is at present a visiting professor at Washington University. Mr. Adams is the author of *Blake and Yeats: The Contrary Vision.*

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of romantic symbolist theories on contemporary criticism.

Of these two books, Krieger's is the more abstract and concerned with pure theory; Kermode refers often to poetic practice. But both approaches to contemporary criticism end by asserting or implying that there is some kind of severe limitation to present theory. Contemporary critics, as Krieger points out, have been mainly contextualists, but the exigencies of practice have often made them break out of their theories. According to Krieger, the contextualist critic believes that:

> . . . the work of criticism is to be offered tentatively and with humility as a well-meaning guide through the well-plotted maze to which it points. It merely is to indicate rewarding configurations among the poem's internal relations since it dare do little more about them. If these critics are told that this is not a very satisfying objective for criticism, then they can only insist meekly that it is the best they can do without violating the art which is in their keeping. In practice, however, even the more modest of them seem to go considerably beyond the severe boundaries of critical discourse to which their contextual theories ought to restrict them.

In searching for value, the contextualist critic, according to Krieger, tends to value complexity cherished for itself, since he is theoretically trapped within the aesthetic object. Reviewing Krieger's book in the *Sewanee Review* (Summer, 1957), Cleanth Brooks expresses the hope that the epilogue of *Literary Criticism: A Short History* will answer Krieger's charge that Brooks is trapped into arguing only for poetic complexity. In the epilogue Wimsatt and Brooks strive for a more eclectic theory than has been obvious in their work heretofore:

> . . . we recognize: (1) the mimetic or Aristotelian, which does justice to the world of things and real values and keeps our criticism from being merely idealistic; (2) the emotive (as developed with most subtlety perhaps by Richards), which does justice to human responses to values and keeps criticism from talking too much about either ethics or physics; (3) the expressionistic (*par excellence* the Crocean), which does justice to man's knowledge as reflexive and creative and keeps criticism from talking about poetry as literal recording of things or responses. Our account of critical history says that the second and third of these radical ideas are present in Aristotle along with the first, though the third, the expressionistic, is surely the weakest of the three and least explicitly developed. It appears to us that these ideas can be made the main points of reference for an indefinitely variable criticism of *all* poems.

In the light of Krieger's difficulties in reaching a consistent theory of contemporary criticism, it seems unlikely that in their thirty-two-page epilogue Wimsatt and Brooks succeed in drawing the three ideas into a single theory. I think it is the vagaries of their style that prevent me from deciding for sure. Let it suffice to say that they have at least set the problem down. If Krieger's and Kermode's conclusions are wistful, it is I who look wistfully at the conclusion of the Wimsatt-Brooks history.

Less wistful lately (and more combative) have been the neo-Aristotelians of the so-called Chicago school, who have attacked critics of the Brooks stripe for their total emphasis upon the expressionistic or linguistic aspects of literature at the expense of structure, genre and convention.* Krieger rejects their theory as a whole but praises them particularly for emphasizing that "conventional patterns . . . are, after all, a significant aspect of the literary medium."

If we are at a moment of crisis in criticism, it is good to know what has brought us to it, and Krieger's and Kermode's books do this quite effectively. That such crises are from time to time inevitable is illustrated by an argument that arose not so long ago in the pages of the *Hudson Review* (Spring and Summer, 1957) between Robert Martin Adams, reviewer of *Literary Criticism: A Short History,* and Messrs. Wimsatt and Brooks. In an unfavorable review Adams attacked the authors for attempting a *theory* of criticism apart from practice. Believing in neither the value nor

* See R. S. Crane (ed.), *Critics and Criticism: Ancient and Modern,* Chicago, $8.50; and R. S. Crane, *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry,* Toronto, $5.50.

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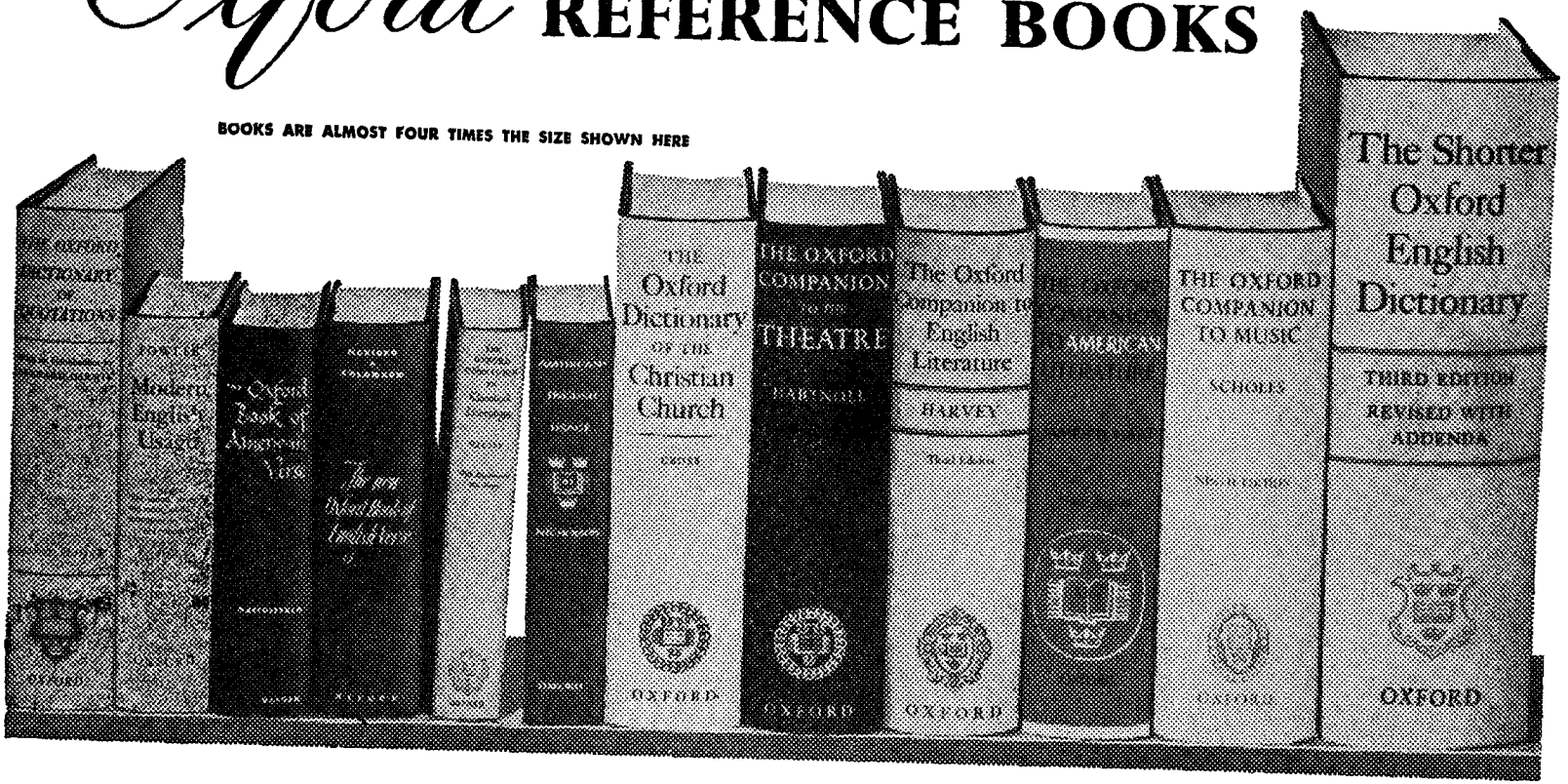

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the possibility of a "conceptual universe for literary criticism," Adams wrote in defense of his review:

> I do not, in short, believe that there is any "continuity and intelligibility in the history of literary argument" apart from literary practice. . . . I think that criticism is a secondary art, which when it becomes rigidly "systematic" often fails to adapt itself to the peculiar quality of the literary material which it discusses, out of which it grows, and to which, at its best, it remains subordinate.

This is an old argument and one that is difficult to answer in the terms in which it is offered. Wimsatt and Brooks reply that the fundamental principle in Adams' philosophy is mistrust of philosophy, and this seems to be a correct judgment if we look at Adams' subsequent review of Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism.* Adams' seems to be the kind of view that would reduce all thinking to nothing. Surely Adams would not cavil at Einstein's general theory even if he knew, as we all do know, that someday it must be proved inadequate. An argument that a "conceptual universe" is not possible is the argument of someone so disillusioned with the limitations of conceptual thinking that he has come to see no use in it at all.

But for Adams to have made his point at this time is instructive, and it carries a half-truth. Brooks, too, has shown himself aware, in a review already cited, of the "dreary *exposition des textes* that has become a kind of standard academic product" (he is quoting Edmund Wilson). And these seem to be the result of pure theory or pure method applied without imagination by followers of the contextualists. But then, in answer to Adams again, the same is true in physics, in chemistry or in any study where theory is not being advanced. What I would wish for, rather than total critical nihilism, is new theory arrived at with the "freshness" that Adams calls for in isolated critical efforts, that is, by a return to the inductive examination of literature rather than the re-examination of aesthetics.

This brings me inevitably to the recent book of critical theory that I value most highly—Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton, $6), a study that is the result of having sought out theory inductively in the study of literary texts themselves. Adams' argument against Frye's book is the same that he levels against Wimsatt and Brooks in the Winter, 1957-58, issue of the *Hudson Review.* But he is forced to be kinder to Frye in spite of, he thinks, Frye's systematic theory. He sees that Frye has insights, many insights. He sees that Frye has wit and style. But he refuses to relate any of these virtues to the fact that Frye has a system, is striving inductively for a conceptual universe for criticism. I find all of these things in Frye difficult to separate. I want his theory along with his insights, his wit and his style because I am uncertain which precedes which. Frye's is a book that returns criticism to literature, yet insists on theory. Its author would be the first to deny the ultimate reality of the theory, the possibility of its being a perfect representation of the literary universe, the impossibility of its being superseded (on the contrary, he would argue that it should be superseded). He is far too aware of the limitations of language for that, but he demands that we work with the language we do have to construct an *idea* of literature. Nor does he assume that literary criticism is to be a science alone (in the naïve sense of the term). He recognizes that theories are created, live and die, that it takes art to create them and only method to kill them.

If I praise Frye's book greatly for these qualities, I am aware that there is another kind of literary criticism—similar, I think, to the kind that Adams might be willing to defend—which is always necessary, and particularly necessary to periods of crisis in theory. I am inclined to call many of the people who write such criticism "violents." The violent may or may not be an academician. I am inclined to think that if a critic is an academic man he is better off as a pacifistic system-maker, a rational man. The nonacademic, on the other hand, seldom knows enough (systematically enough) to create a seaworthy theory. Good nonacademic critics are often, however, better writers than their academic half-brethren (their attacks are

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wittier and braver, if less informed); and since they are often poets and novelists themselves, their writing performs a two-fold task—oblique supplementation of their own work, as well as criticism of the work of others. As such, their work has a decided advantage at the very outset over the academic violent, who usually has no work of his own to supplement, and in the area of style may be found wanting. As an example of the criticism of academic violence, I submit F. R. Leavis' *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* (Knopf, $5). Leavis has many insights into Lawrence, and he is on a campaign to see him placed at the top of the critical ladder for our time. His book includes an interesting analysis of *Women in Love,* but the book as a whole has two failures. First, Leavis apparently feels that the bulkier the commentary the more certain we can be of greatness (perhaps he has some wish to emulate Joyce criticism, since Joyce seems to be standing in Lawrence's way). Second, Leavis feels compelled constantly to assert Lawrence's greatness, and this leitmotiv, recurring when the going gets rough, begins to sound like a repeated shout of self-encouragement. Mr. Leavis is an academic violent who is not afraid to be querulous in print. He is better than many of his tribe and performs the service of shaking us up now and then. But we are inclined to cease reading him.

If Leavis has the *hubris* of seldom testing his ideas against a theory, too many other academic violents, worse off by far, fall into the error of confusing themselves with the men they are writing about. The academic should remember that it does not take genius to understand, say, Joyce or Blake. After all the time that he has put in on the subject he very well should understand—and probably better than he does. If he understands his subject, he should consider it proof of his perseverence and above-average reading comprehension. And he should not confuse this comprehension with creative intelligence. Nor should he without great stealth attempt violence. I once heard a self-styled academic "expert" on one of the great twentieth-century writers remark that Nathanael West was no good because Celine had done it all before. This almost heroic example of critical *hubris* gives our academic away as having forgotten his place. He is scurrying mouse-like into a forest of violence where, watch out, Robert Graves may lurk, hungry for more than grandmother. Few academics, of course, would make such a judgment in print; the secret desire of this one was to play genius rather than workman. That he really wished to display *his* genius at the expense of West's is the measure of his lack of system and desire for prestige. I have no immediate example in print of academic violence at such a shrill pitch. I can think only of Shaw on Shakespeare and Eliot on Milton, and these, of course, are nonacademic violents and therefore allowed the license and the pleasure.

I have already mentioned Robert Graves. He is a true, if extreme, nonacademic violent. He seldom writes anything that is not interesting. In recent years, it seems to me, he has been pretty consistently wrong. But his violence is art and sometimes criticism, and I value it. Who else would have the nerve to attack every major poet and their readers as well in one short essay? That is, in fact, what "These Be Your Gods, O Israel!" in *The Crowning Privilege* (Doubleday, $5) does. And despite the unfairness of this attack and the irrationality of its grounds, I somehow welcomed it for the fury it engendered among what a Texan friend of mine calls, according to his moods, the "art-nannies" or the "plains bohemians." Among other things, that essay, from an accomplished poet, points out that the heroes are now dead. It also is the most remarkable example of professional jealousy that I know. It is, in fact, a kind of tribute to the very poets being attacked.

Graves is a very special example—a berserk of violents. I deal with him here in order to call attention to his two recent books, *The Crowning Privilege* and *Five Pens in Hand* (Doubleday, $4.50). Actually, the best example of a critic who eschews system is R. P. Blackmur, but I have no recent book by him to mention. Failing this example, I turn to a Modern Library Paperback by Leo Stein called *Apprecia-*

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tion: *Painting, Poetry and Prose* (Modern Library, $.95), a book full of excellent isolated insights, some on an abstract aesthetic level. All are expressed in a good readable style. And then there is a small book no bigger than a long essay, called *Cobras and Cockle Shells: Modes in Recent Poetry* (Sparrow, $1.50) by Frederick Eckman, a perceptive study of language and style in today's poetry. Eckman has a kind of system (I detect some influence of Frye's schematic method); but he is also a violent, and his system is no field theory, although it has some of the paraphernalia of the academy around the edges. It makes as much sense as anything I have seen on the subject of really contemporary poetry.

The exception that proves the rule that academics are usually best off with system is Morton Dauwen Zabel's *Craft and Character in Modern Fiction* (Viking, $4.50), a collection of essays on modern fiction that is especially interesting on Dickens, to whom the first three essays are devoted. I am not saying that Zabel has no theory of literature but that his essays are constantly directed back upon the literary object in interesting ways, and we have the sense of an acute mind hunting up ways to approach the object. This is, in fact, the beginning of theory, toward which some minds quite naturally gravitate. I, for one, am glad that some minds do and some do not, and that those who do not—or those who are just starting out in the direction of theory—happen to be visible here and there today, when with "dreary expositions" on all sides we are looking to the horizon.

It is difficult to accept the idea that critical schools and theories are born, live and die as rapidly as they do today. The furious acceleration of all phases of learning is reflected in the last 150 years of literary criticism, and particularly in the early old age, almost as it developed, of the new criticism. The appearance of histories of criticism by new critics, and even historical analyses of the new criticism, come as somewhat of a shock. Perhaps even what seems to many so unique and great a book as Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, like Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* in literature itself, represents the completion rather than the beginning of an era that enjoyed its summer in the thirties and forties. Even if this is so, I am certain that what arises after Frye's book will arise more easily from its having existed. In short, I do not know what unknown critic in the next few years will come through the desert leading what rough beast. But I can already see—to continue the paraphrase of Yeats—who the reeling, indignant desert birds will be, and I am certain that whoever leads that beast will have read and assimilated Frye. When he emerges from the wasteland he will knock down systems and build up another, and the destruction alone, as in Frye's first chapter, will be mighty to behold.

Brief Comments

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the enormous plunderings of past time. A lichen takes on significance, a little fall of rock going down into remote silences tells the story of a continent.

There are human minds that compare, not insignificantly, with this great chasm, but they are few. Mr. Krutch's observations will enable men of reasonable sensitivity to appreciate more fully that nature out of which they have emerged and to treasure more profoundly their own solitudes and interior descents. A man in whom there are no vertiginous depths, runs Mr. Krutch's message, will get but little pleasure out of gawking on a canyon rim. One must bring depth to gaze into depth, and this Mr. Krutch has done.

LOREN EISELEY

PENN'S WOODS WEST. By Edwin L. Peterson, with photographs by Thomas M. Jarrett. *University of Pittsburgh Press. $15.00.*

This is a remarkably beautiful book, with its fine and tasteful format and its excellent, varied and abundant photographs. Although its purpose is to present the as yet unpeopled sections of Western Pennsylvania, through the recounting of a year's journey by the author and photographer, it is something far beyond a travel book or a picture book.

The land, the lakes and rivers, the mountains and valleys, the foxes and grasshoppers and dogwood trees of the region are all the author's province; and he has for them what no journey could ever give him: a deep understanding and a reverent and knowledgeable love. Whatever he touches —whether it is the vast sweep of the Allegheny River or a crystal of frost—he sees freshly and embodies without cliché. His style, all of one piece and totally informed with his nature and his enthusiasm, adapts itself to current and historical narrative, executes the most economic and telling kind of exposition, does a bit of description with an ease and spareness reminiscent of Chinese brush painting, and rises to a lyricism worthy of Whitman and to a quiet, meditative tone as authentic as Thoreau's.

And the style is at its best when it expounds his underlying theme: the precarious and mysterious interrelationship between man and the natural world—a cooperation that admits no callousness and no sentimentality. "Only a few inches of topsoil separate us from death. Those few miraculous inches give us most of our food, our clothes, our houses, our cocktails and silverware and radios, and the books we read and the shoes we wear and the cool water we drink. Without topsoil and trees on the hillside there could not long be factories in the valley. Without the dogwood and the shadbush that blossom here tonight there could not long be lights in the windows of the city."

GLADYS SCHMITT

CORAL ISLAND: Portrait of an Atoll. By Marston Bates and Donald Abbott. Illustrated. *Scribner's. $4.95.*

In the summer of 1953, a well-rounded scientific team of seven scientists in the fields of marine biology, biology, hydrology, geology, zoology, anthropology and ichthyology came to Ifaluk, a tiny atoll in the vast Pacific. With great good will and intense scientific curiosity, tempered with humor, perseverence and common sense, they studied the island from almost every conceivable viewpoint in the brief period of their stay and departed with a vast amount of information that will one day be incorporated in a monograph on the natural history of the island and its people. *Coral Island* is a kind of preview, beautifully arranged by the two leaders of the expedition, Marston Bates and Donald Abbott.

In simple, factual style, the authors describe the way of life on the island (almost idyllic), its economy (abundant), its people (charming), customs (sensible), ability to survive (adequate and efficient). They dig wells to examine the isle's water tables, ransack the lagoons and tidal reefs for an extremely rich collection of marine plant life, invertebrates and fishes, make maps, record the food eaten daily by the atoll's 280 men, women and children, and study native crafts and language. "Productive" is the word for this kind of an expedition.

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trayal of one of the most interesting phenomena of nature, the tiny jewel-like atoll of the Pacific.

GORDON CUYLER

WILLIAMSTOWN BRANCH: Impersonal Memories of a Vermont Boyhood. By R. L. Duffus. *Norton. $3.75.*

If it were possible to have John Keats, Alben Barkley, Marcel Proust, Mark Twain and Sean O'Casey converted into born Vermonters, interweaving amicably their impressions of a boy's impression of people, seasons and events in a New England town just before the turn of the century, the result—whether resembling *Williamstown Branch* in any respect or not—might easily be as interesting. It could scarcely be better. With humor, compassion, sharpness of characterization, felicity of phrasing and an unfailingly clear-sighted love of life both as it might be and as it is, R. L. Duffus of the New York *Times* has here given us a salute to man and the sweet ache of irreversible time that men and women of perception and good will may well be reading fifty years from now with pleasure and a sense of surprised identification close to our own.

Although sampling is not often the fairest or most useful way of reporting on a book, easy as it is on the reviewer, in this case the temptation will go unresisted. Here is New York's R. L. Duffus, at his present lightly worn seventy years, considering Vermont's Robbie Duffus at ten:

> By the end of May and the beginning of June we were sure at last that spring was not a time for going anywhere; spring was a time for not going anywhere and not doing anything, spring was a time for lying in the soft new grass, and maybe even in the shade, and letting time go by.
>
> Why did we let time go by? It would have been so much better if we had not. But it did. It slipped through our fingers, it ruffled our hair, it teased us with all sorts of promises, it made itself seem valuable but nevertheless a value to be spent without thought. In May, at the age of ten, we lay in the grass and let time blow through us and change us. A few more springs—but that was not then our problem; we did not believe that this spring would vanish. . . .

It won't vanish. Rob Duffus grown, in this book, has seen to that.

CHARLES O'NEILL

THE VOYAGES OF JOSHUA SLOCUM. Edited and with Commentaries by Walter Magnes Teller. *Rutgers University Press. $6.00.*

Captain Slocum was the first man to accomplish the feat described in his own *Sailing Alone Around the World* (1900). His book enjoyed rather more than a modest success and has never been entirely forgotten. In this volume it is reprinted together with his two previous narratives of adventure, accompanied by a biographical introduction as well as by bibliographical and other apparatus. The job has been extremely well done and was much worth doing.

Slocum was a flavorsome original, just queer enough to become, in Mr. Teller's hands, an intriguing character. Deprived of a profession by the decline of sail, he retired to his thirty-six-foot *Spray* as a kind of Walden and meditated as well as sailed around the world. Although he had very little formal education, he was just well enough read to achieve a style that seems to be a genuine expression of the man even though it is not quite professional. He does not seem to have known *Walden*, but he and Thoreau were enough alike in temperament and background to make some of his sentences sound as though Thoreau might have written them. Of an officious, bungling pilot in the Azores he remarks: "The youngster, I have no reason to doubt, could have handled a man-of-war, but the *Spray* was too small for the amount of uniform he wore."

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

BIZET AND HIS WORLD. By Mina Curtiss. Illustrated. *Knopf. $7.50.*

It is Mina Curtiss' "notion" that ". . . the clue to the creative process, the secret of life, lies in letters." While working on her translation of Proust's letters (published in

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1949), she unexpectedly came upon a huge trove of Bizet material, "letters from Bizet to his parents, his wife, and his mother-in-law; letters to Fromental Halévy from Rossini, Verdi, Meyerbeer, Berlioz, and many other important contemporary figures—letters which had never before been seen by anyone but the correspondents themselves or their heirs."

Here then in these holographs was Bizet alive for at least a portion of his brief, disastrous life: he was thirty-six years old when he died, and not one of his major works had been successfully received. And here were intimations of Bizet's world: Paris during the Second Empire, the Commune, the Franco-Prussian War, the Siege and the early days of the Third Republic. Here, also, in Bizet's marriage and life with Geneviève Halévy, was a direct link to the later world of Marcel Proust and his *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, for Mme Bizet, *veuve*, became Mme Émile Straus and subsequently a friend of the young Proust and part model for his Duchesse de Guermantes. In 1920 he wrote to Mme Straus, "My friends . . . will also rediscover in the *Côté de Guermantes* witticisms of yours over which they have laughed when I repeated them and which I am having the Duchesse de Guermantes say. . . ."

For eight years Mrs. Curtiss meticulously investigated Bizet and his world. The resultant volume is not essentially a book for musicians and music lovers, but a brilliantly documented biography ("a historical painting carried out in *montage*," explains Mrs. Curtiss) which must fascinate all concerned with literature, the arts, life itself.

LEO LERMAN

JOSEPH CONRAD: Letters to William Blackwood and David S. Meldrum. Edited by William Blackburn. *Duke University Press. $6.00.*

This handsome, engrossing and very competently edited volume has its scholarly revelations. Thus the shadowy Wyndham (who vanished between Conrad's manuscript "The Rescuer" of the late 1890's and his published novel *The Rescue* of 1920) here emerges as a historical personage, perhaps the very prototype of Conrad's white meddlers in native intrigue. Above all, however, these letters throw light on the period of Conrad's contributions to *Maga*, and on the unpredictable and at last appalling swellings (beyond their modest plans) of "Heart of Darkness" and *Lord Jim*. On December 17 of 1899, Conrad hoped to finish *Lord Jim* by the end of the year; we in our wisdom know he had 80,000 words still to go.

The exasperations of Blackwood (who had once been informed by Conrad that "Heart of Darkness" was not gloomy) can be understood. But Mr. Blackburn sympathizes with him rather more than I. I find it saddening to see Conrad, after twenty-three hours at work finishing *Lord Jim*, feel obliged to pen an apology to his publisher; or to see him offer (against a further fifty-pound payment and a three-hundred-pound loan secured by life insurance) the absolute properties of both *Lord Jim* and *Youth*. The offer was declined as too risky. But the Conrad who wrote to Blackwood

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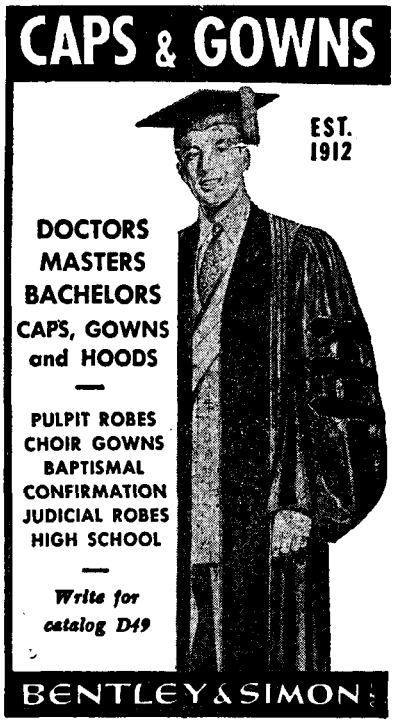

that "ultimate and irretrievable failure is *not* to be my lot" turned out to be right. *Lord Jim* sold only 3,150 copies in its first four years of life. But by 1948 it had sold over 100,000, in Blackwood editions alone.

ALBERT J. GUERARD

GRANITE AND RAINBOW. By Virginia Woolf. *Harcourt, Brace. $3.75.*

When this most recent book of Virginia Woolf's posthumously published essays appeared late last autumn, reviewers in America and Britain were disappointed. I find this strange, for in this collection, the fourth and most unexpected since her death in 1941, Mrs. Woolf is not infrequently at her best. *Phases of Fiction,* published in three issues of *The Bookman* in 1929 and some fifty-two pages in length, is typical of all that made Mrs. Woolf "one of the finest critics of our time" (Edwin Muir). It pulses with that informed, fastidious enthusiasm for literature and the art of writing that was Virginia Woolf's own. She makes one want to cast aside all other pleasures and sit right down to a feast of fiction—and *such* fiction: books by Defoe and Swift, Maupassant and Proust, Scott and Stevenson and Mrs. Radcliffe, Dickens and Miss Austen and George Eliot, Henry James—Mrs. Woolf's list is long and glorious.

One finds much pleasure in *Granite and Rainbow* (so diligently collected by Miss B. L. Kirkpatrick, who compiled *A Bibliography of Virginia Woolf,* and Dr. Mary Lyon of Radcliffe and Harvard, currently writing *Virginia Woolf as Critic*) not because it is the best Woolf, but because it is, no matter what its inadequacies, the mistress herself, head over heels in love with books and telling the world all about it.

LEO LERMAN

YOUNG MAN LUTHER: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History. By Erik H. Erikson. *Norton. $4.50.*

"I intend to take my subtitle seriously," Erik Erikson states early in this book—and he does. This study is more than a psychoanalytic biography; it is a pioneer venture linking psychoanalysis and history. Often it succeeds in integrating them; and even when it only juxtaposes them, it makes a stimulating try. It is an important book.

Erik Erikson is a psychoanalyst, and a thoughtful scholar, distinguished by his work with gifted neurotic adolescents and by his effective studies outlining the relationship between culture and the individual. This book concerns Martin Luther—not the sturdy, austere DoktorMartinLuther (a name still spoken by many as one word), but the puzzled, earnest, neurotic youth, during the "crisis of identity" in his life. Erikson writes with objectivity, as if about a patient, yet without jargon; he is aware, even when evaluating Luther's constipation, of the "potential great man."

But his observations are not limited to Luther. Erikson deals with fundamental questions of how a man is molded, how he grows from that mold, and how he in turn molds his culture and the future. For example, he links the patterns of Luther with their distortion by the Hitler mythology. He brings together disparate facts into pro-

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HERBERT HAUCK

LAND IN SEARCH OF GOD. By Stanley J. Rowland, Jr. *Random House. $3.95.*

Here is an attempt to answer the questions: Why is there a revival of religious interest and participation? What does this reveal about us as Americans? What is the relevance of religion to some of the basic challenges of our times?

In answering these questions, the author offers a wide and inclusive analysis of America's growing religious interest. Protestant, Catholic and Jewish functions are presented with the contributions of science, poetry, religious art, faith healing and religious architecture. Leaders considered include Billy Graham, Tillich, Niebuhr, Hopper, Fromm, Niemoller, Welch, Spike, Peale, Blake, Mellon, Jr., Cushing, Pike, Fox, Myers and King.

Mr. Rowland contends that the younger generation is open to creative leadership or destructive demagoguery. He concludes that we are involved in the search for God simply by being alive, that we seek a source of meaning for creative assertion, that there is probably no road except the road of the courageous seeker that finally can reach the objective of this search.

This book is penetrating, exciting and extremely contemporary. The style of writing, as well as the fresh approach to the subject, should be of great interest to laymen as well as professionals. I particularly commend it to students who are anxious to find a deeper understanding of their own search for God.

REV. DAN M. POTTER

THE MURO-JI: An Eighth Century Japanese Temple, Its Art and History. Photographs by Ken Domon. English text by Roy Andrew Miller after the Japanese original of Momoo Kitagawa. Published in Japan by *Bijutsu Shuppan-Sha*, in the United States by *Grove. $12.50.*

Deep in rural Nara Prefecture, the ancient Buddhist temple of Muro-Ji is off the beaten track even for the Japanese, for whom the text and pictures of this book were originally prepared. Now translated into English with photographs reproduced in fifty-six meticulous black and white plates, the present volume makes the art and setting of Muro-Ji, distant in both time and space, accessible to the Western student of Oriental art as well as the general reader.

Although scholars may find small flaws in it, most people will find this picture book an unmitigated delight. Its main appeal lies in the photographs by Ken Domon, famous in Japan and camera circles. His plates proceed through the seasons and the rich natural setting of Muro-Ji, from the cliff carvings on its outskirts, down the stream to the bridge in the center of town, up the moss-covered temple steps to the Main Hall, inside to the wooden images of

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Buddha, out to the weathered eighth-century pagoda and finally up to the mountain in back where Japanese venerated nature long before Buddha. It would be hard to imagine a more peaceful work than this, with its serene faces of Sakyamuni and Maitreya and its dramatic demonstration of art at one with nature. Significantly, Domon took many of his pictures during the last war.

The text lacks the straightforward organization of the pictures. Two pleasant but repetitive personal accounts, one by Domon, the other by art historian Momoo Kitagawa, surround the main text, Kitagawa's history of Buddhism with special attention paid to Muro-Ji's Shingon Sect. While useful to the novice, this is conventional scholarship even to the point of being slightly out of date (Gautama's chronology, for example). Regrettably the description of the plates does not follow the order of the pictures, and furthermore there are no pictures for some of the descriptions. The expert, however, would willingly sacrifice several shots of thirteenth-century guardian warriors, numerous elsewhere, for more of the eighth-century *mandara* painting, which exists almost solely here. Roy Miller's translation reads smoothly in spite of the pitfalls, mostly side-stepped, awaiting the Westerner who assays esoteric art and religion simultaneously.

DALLAS FINN

THE ACADEMIC MARKETPLACE. By Theodore Caplow and Reece J. McGee. *Basic Books. $4.95.*

How and why do people get jobs as university teachers? How and why do they leave or get fired? These are questions important to the future of American education, and Messrs. Caplow and McGee have gone hunting for answers.

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(*Continued on page 260*)

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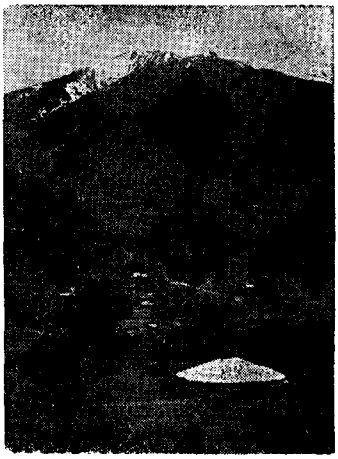

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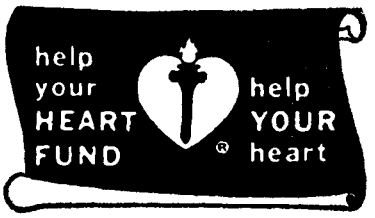

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(*Continued from page 250*)

getting their subjects across to their students, they are pressured into publication before they are mature enough to do definitive jobs. A stack of printed matter, regardless of its quality, is almost mandatory, although few chairmen, and fewer appointments committees, really *read* the stuff. It is mainly window dressing to impress presidents and deans; the candidate may actually have been chosen because he played the recorder and his competitors did not.

This book is a sociological study, with all the stupefying apparatus of statistical tables, and footnotes that invoke such entities as Chi and Pearsonian *r*. It should be unreadable. It is not, because of its revealing quotations from academic individuals and because the authors themselves, when they can forget their tables, write forceful English. They conclude that the present system is a mess and that something can be done about it—if.

DELANCEY FERGUSON

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY. By Harry Howe Ransom. *Harvard University Press. $4.75.*

"Intelligence work in time of peace differs fundamentally from that in time of war," wrote Allen Dulles, currently director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Mr. Ransom quotes the remark approvingly, and of course it states a fact. If anyone should say that "tank work" or "strategic bombardment" in war differs from such work in peace, it would seem a thundering redundancy. Not so with intelligence; Mr. Dulles' emphasis is misplaced. Intelligence in peace differs far *less* from intelligence in war than most other branches of military or quasi-military activity. For intelligence there is no "peace"; it is always operational.

Mr. Ransom has given us a competent and lucid exposition of the historical background and present structure of the American intelligence organization. Should there be, as Senator Mansfield thinks, a greater degree of Congressional surveillance over

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our intelligence bureaucracy? Mr. Ransom does not venture deep into such controversial issues, but dispassionately sketches the pros and cons. His book's principal shortcoming is the lack of comparison, which should be enlightening, with the intelligence services of other great powers, especially Great Britain.

TELFORD TAYLOR

PARTY COMMITTEES AND NATIONAL POLITICS. By Hugh A. Bone. *University of Washington Press. $4.50.*

The author of this book, useful in its limited field, has restricted his account to the activities of the national committees of the two major parties, basing the descriptive parts largely on materials relating "to the Republican National Committee under Chairman Leonard Hall and to the Democratic National Committee under the leadership of Stephen Mitchell and Paul Butler." While some of the comment is more general than this quotation indicates, a study so narrow in perspective cannot bring many insights to readers acquainted with the subject. The accounts of the campaign committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives and of the Senate policy committees add summary information.

A danger in a study of this type, unless the author keeps clearly in mind his awareness of a different view, is that a reader may assume that the government of the United States is managed by political leaders elected by the efforts of nationally organized parties, and that the weakness revealed in the central organizations of the parties implies a corresponding weakness in the political organization of the nation. As the author observes, the national committees are chiefly caretakers between the quadrennial Presidential elections and have difficulty in attracting enough popular attention to win needed public support. The Congressional campaign committees have an even smaller role in the biennial elections that are largely determined by personal qualities of the candidates and local conditions in the several states and districts. The book, however, does bring together information on the subjects treated, and not all of the generalizations are as vague as this one: "Although organized on a state basis, the national committee is at its best when it expresses and symbolizes an interest broader than the separate party entities incarnate in the congressional party and the myriad of local organizations."

W. T. LAPRADE

A NEW HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES. By William Miller. *Braziller. $5.00.*

This book, presented by its publisher as "the most exciting history of the United States written in the past quarter of a century," is intended for "the mature general reader." As such it follows the tradition of the Beards' *Rise of American Civilization* and James Truslow Adams' *Epic of America* without being as majestic as the first or as colorful as the latter. Covering half a millenium, it begins and ends with Western civilization pessimistic and threatened with extinction by Asiatic barbarism. But between those two dates, Western Europe broke out of its confines to carry its heritage and institutions to every part of the globe, establishing colonies, of which the first to become an independent nation was the United States.

Mr. Miller, a journalist who has collaborated with academic historians in previous works, is obviously most at home in the period since the Civil War. He leaves a number of challengeable impressions concerning witchcraft prosecutions in both the Old World and the New, the impact of the Turks on trade with the Orient, New England Puritanism, the motives for Scotch-Irish emigration to the colonies, colonial suffrage, the Embargo, the background of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and other interpretations in which the conclusions of recent scholarship are overlooked. The treatment of such later eras as that of the growth of big business and its consequences, the New Deal, World War II and its aftermath, reflects the conclusions of their ablest investigators. The whole is marked by nu-

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merous illuminating insights and sidelights.

Sources are sometimes indicated in the text. There are no footnote references, but there is a useful bibliography and a good index.

WOOD GRAY

AMERICA GOES TO WAR. By Bruce Catton. *Wesleyan University Press. $3.00.*

One is constantly amazed at the productivity of Bruce Catton, especially considering the quality of his work. Now he has put together a short book based on the idea that too much is being written about the Civil War—too much, at least, with too little understanding of what it all meant and what it still means today.

Dealing solely with the North, the seven chapters in this book speculate about such diverse matters as the politics of war, the citizen soldier, and the horrors of a conflict we now tend to remember as romantic. If Mr. Catton does not convince us that the Civil War was the first modern war, at least he is always provocative and interesting; and when he discusses General Grant as President, he is bold enough in his implications and shrewd enough in his observations to make the reader feel that history does repeat itself after all. No matter what his subject, he is able to call upon a tremendous store of interesting information; the anecdotes in particular are excellent. What better way to illustrate the ingenuousness of boys from the Midwest than to relate how, when going to enlist, they could not lie about their age to the government, and so put a piece of paper in their shoe with the number "18" written on it in order to be able to say they were *over* eighteen?

It must be said, however, that there is something too easy and facile about this book. It is also oddly repetitious, although perhaps this is related to its origin on the lecture platform. Still, Bruce Catton has taken a venturesome step in a direction too infrequently trod by other writers on the subject; and in doing so he has created food for thought distinctive and different enough to satisfy the gourmet, as well as make a fine appetizer for the feast of the coming Centennial.

ROBERT D. LOOMIS

OFF THE RECORD WITH F.D.R. By William D. Hassett, with an Introduction by Jonathan Daniels. *Rutgers University Press. $6.00.*

It is improbable that this volume will alter to an appreciable extent any historical judgment thus far formulated with regard to Franklin D. Roosevelt. Nevertheless, in the immense canon of Rooseveltiana this is by no means the least important item, for while it does not alter a single conspicuous line of the picture, it does paint in the flesh-tints and give the image the likeness of a living man.

Hassett was in some respects the closest of those confidential secretaries that Roosevelt understood how to bind to him with hoops of steel. His relationship was not exactly that of Louis Howe or Missy LeHand or Grace Tully, yet it was similar; like them, he felt that he was the liegeman of a great man and found it a happy service.

He has transmitted to the future an account not so much of an American statesman as of a first-rate personality and of the warmhearted and generous, if occasionally capricious, friendship it offered to the loyal who stood nearby. So what if it is not an addition to history? It is an addition to "humane letters" in the old sense, that is to say, writings dealing with the fine qualities of the finer specimens of humanity. And that, perhaps, will prove more enduring than even the most rigidly analytical history.

GERALD W. JOHNSON

THE SUPREME COURT AS FINAL ARBITER IN FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS. By John R. Schmidhauser. *University of North Carolina Press. $5.00.*

The recent Southern protests against anti-segregation decisions and the Dixiecrat claim of "judicial usurpation" have again focused attention on the problem of resolving conflicts of authority between nation and state. Palpably, a federal system of gov-

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ernment needs an umpire. With surprising objectivity, Professor Schmidhauser summarizes in this brief book the origin of the Supreme Court's status as arbiter of the American federal system and the exercise of its function from 1789 to 1957.

The most novel contribution is the demonstration that the charge of judicial usurpation is based on invincible ignorance. Both the draftsmen of the Constitution and the delegates to the ratifying conventions understood the necessity for giving a single agency power to resolve disputes between state and nation. The supremacy clause of the Federal Constitution—placing ultimate authority in the United States Supreme Court—was a compromise solution intended to placate the smaller states and the defenders of states' rights, as against Madison's concept that Congress should be empowered to veto state action.

A tendency to reify political ideas is the present book's basic weakness. Rhetoric invoking such symbols as dual federalism or judicial self-restraint is assumed to reflect the philosophies of individual judges and to indicate trends in legal thinking. Insufficient attention is paid to the economic and social preconceptions that motivate decision and make comprehensible doctrinally inconsistent judicial opinions.

ASHER LANS

COMING

Summer 1959 Special Issue

on

Contemporary Poetry

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The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington 9, D. C. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*
—EDITOR

In his column in the Winter, 1958-59, issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Joseph Wood Krutch laments the treatment of human beings as "things." I, too, resent this, but I feel there is another side of the picture.

A large part of our progress in medical science has been achieved by tacitly assuming that people are "things," that they are machines which can be understood by finding out the chemical and physical factors causing them to work. As a result of this concentration on mechanical factors, the self-regulating endocrine system, for example, was described, and cortisone and ACTH were added to medical therapeutics.

Similarly much work is now being done on the biochemical basis of mental disorders. Some time in the future we will know what goes on internally when people think certain thoughts and feel certain emotions.

There are problems associated with this. Presumably, if we understand the mechanics of thoughts and emotions, we can control them. And who is to control the controller? Also, it is a hard blow for us to realize that we are more complex but not essentially different from the huge machines we are constructing.

The first question will have to be answered exactly as we would answer the question of who controls the controllers of the other processes of our bodies, i.e., who controls the health professions. That question has been answered to a workable degree at the present time.

The question of completely equating human beings and machines can best be solved by assuming—and this assumption I strongly believe—that there is something more to us than can be explained by physical laws. This something more is what really constitutes our humanity and makes life worth living. It has been described by poets, but I don't think it has been understood, and I don't want it to be understood—by anyone.

Granted this assumption, there is no reason why scientists cannot search for the physical laws underlying our behavior and perhaps some day clear the mental hospitals of their wretched occupants.

I realize this is not a new viewpoint and I'm sure Mr. Krutch appreciates it, but I think it deserves to be repeated.

JULIAN KIVOWITZ, M.D.
Buffalo, New York

It seems to me that Morris Freedman's interesting article, "The Dangers of Nonconformism" [AS: Winter, 1958-59], misses two crucial points.

First, the nonconformity of each generation is creative of new culture traits necessary to adjust to changing conditions. These traits, to use Freedman's own terms, are then "spilled over from the high-brow crest onto the extensive middle-brow plateaus." This is the positive aspect.

Second, the logical issue should be conformity—or nonconformity—to what? Does Freedman envision a general personality type such as Adorno's disputed "authoritarian personality"? What rational person is not sometimes a conformist and sometimes a nonconformist, depending on the issue and his developed sense of propriety?

SIMON D. MESSING
Hiram, Ohio

Mr. Freedman in "The Dangers of Nonconformism" has strained out the gnat and swallowed the camel. Better we should welcome the eccentrics who relieve the dull monotony of our mass conformism. There is little evidence that intellectuals are unthinkingly making a cult of nonconformity, or that they are trying to enslave their fellows, as the author maintains.

The shallowness of his analysis is revealed in his statement that "*Life* in recent years has so well caught the importance of being fashionably nonconformist that it is now a leader in establishing accepted nonconformist thought. . . ."

REVEREND EUGENE KREVES
Plainfield, Illinois

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